

As USSR leaves, Afghan war continues

BY FRED FELDMAN

The withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan has been nearly completed, as the February 15 deadline set in the accords signed last April draws near. "On Sunday the last Soviet soldier left Kabul," reported a Soviet radio broadcast February 5. Kabul is the capital of Afghanistan.

The official Soviet news agency Tass reported February 7 that 35,000 troops had been withdrawn from Afghanistan in recent weeks. Other reports from Moscow indicated the remainder would soon be airlifted out of the country.

Gen. Boris Gromov reportedly said at a Kabul news conference that the withdrawal of ground troops would also mean ending the use of Soviet air power to prop up the regime in Kabul. On February 7 Soviet Foreign Ministry officials neither confirmed nor denied this.

As the nine-year Soviet troop intervention draws to an end, the U.S. government's role in the war assumed a high profile.

Washington Post correspondent James Rupert described the arrival on February 3 of a convoy of 15 truckloads of U.S.-supplied weapons in rebel-held Torkham, near the Pakistan border. They are to be used in the siege of Jalalabad.

Rupert obtained what he called "an unusual glimpse of the pipeline — operated jointly by the CIA and Pakistan's military intelligence agency — that for years has supplied the guerrillas."

"Jeeps arrived carrying American and Pakistani supervisors," he reported. The supervisors, the three American ones wearing Pakistani civilian clothes, oversaw and took film of the arrival and unloading of the arms trucks. U.S. reporters were barred from taking pictures.

U.S. President George Bush stated January 27 that his administration hoped to play "a catalytic role for helping to bring about stability" in Afghanistan.

As the 115,000 Soviet troops have left Afghanistan over the past nine months, rightist forces have occupied more of the countryside, forcing the government to concentrate its forces in major cities.

A returning Soviet army officer, cited in the Soviet government newspaper *Izvestia*, described a convoy returning to the Soviet Union along a road lined with guerrillas carrying grenade launchers.

Rightist gains

The rightist advances have produced a new flow of Afghan refugees into Pakistan, where more than 3 million Afghans have fled since the Soviet troops arrived in 1979.

"In October, when *mujaheddin* [as the antigovernment forces are called] overran Asadabad, the capital of Kunar Province, northeast of Jalalabad, the civilian population fled, largely because of looting and destruction of property by the guerrillas."

In Shewa district, near Jalalabad, "regime supporters were killed and the population has fled to Pakistan," reported Naim Majrooh, the director of the Afghan Information Center in Peshawar, Pakistan.

From Peshawar, correspondent Rupert wrote January 23 about "reports reaching

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Salvadoran rebels call for 60-day cease-fire

BY FRED FELDMAN

The Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) has proposed a 60-day cease-fire in the war in El Salvador, provided the government accepts a plan for re-scheduled presidential elections. The truce would run for 30 days before and after the voting.

The February 7 offer from the FMLN, a bloc of five organizations waging an armed struggle against the military-dominated regime, widens their recent proposals for the presidential elections. Representatives of all parties participating in the election, now scheduled for March 19, met in San Salvador to discuss the FMLN proposals.

On February 1 the top five commanders of the FMLN issued a communiqué announcing that it will "suspend military attacks against U.S. personnel, military installations, civilians, and diplomats," except for U.S. military advisers stationed in military barracks or traveling with the Salvadoran government's army.

The U.S. has more than 100 military personnel in El Salvador and 100 civilian officials of the Agency for International Development.

The step was decided on, the signers declared, in response to "the positive reaction to our peace plan by various sectors in the United States, and with hope of a change in U.S. policy toward our country."

On January 24 the FMLN made public an offer to participate in the presidential elections being staged by the government.

To make this possible, the FMLN called on the regime to postpone the voting for six months and take steps to halt repression and other interference by the Salvadoran armed forces and U.S. government.

The FMLN has opposed the last five national elections, carried out under U.S. and Salvadoran military auspices, as fraudulent.

Sources described as being "close to the FMLN" reportedly told *Washington Post* reporter Douglas Farah in San Salvador that the U.S. government has now "established, for the first time, a channel of communications with the insurgents." No Bush administration official, nor any leading member of Congress in either party, however, has called on the Salvadoran govern-

Sandinista gov't declares end to land confiscations

BY LARRY SEIGLE
AND JUDY WHITE

MANAGUA, Nicaragua — In a major policy shift, the Sandinista government has promised to end land expropriations, to allow some capitalists limited rights to export their products directly, and to return some state-owned businesses to private ownership.

The new steps are part of a policy aimed at reaching an "accord" with the capitalist opposition. The government hopes the measures will encourage capital investment, thereby stimulating economic growth.

Government officials have been holding negotiations with businessmen, including cattle ranchers and coffee and cotton growers.

"The private sector has been hit hard, and we have to help it, the way we have already helped the cooperatives and state enterprises," said Jaime Wheelock, minister of agrarian development and reform.

"We want to send clear signals to everyone," he told the *New York Times*.



Militant/Steven Fuchs

Victim of mine explosion in Usulután, El Salvador. Human toll of U.S.-sponsored war continues to mount.

ment to accept and implement the plan.

On February 3, during an official visit to El Salvador, U.S. Vice-President Danforth Quayle indicated that the U.S. government would support postponement of the elections if Salvadoran President José Napoleón Duarte forged a political consensus in favor of doing so.

After initially denouncing the FMLN plan as "unconstitutional" and "a proposal for war," Duarte said he would accept postponement of the elections only if all other

parties now participating in them went along.

Alfredo Cristiani, presidential candidate of the rightist Nationalist Republican Alliance (ARENA) is currently favored to defeat Fidel Chávez Mena, the nominee of Duarte's Christian Democratic party.

Cristiani initially rejected the FMLN offer out of hand.

However, ARENA leaders also modified their stance. On February 1 ARENA leader Sigifredo Ochoa proposed that the five top FMLN leaders be granted a three-day amnesty February 10-12 for discussions in San Salvador with the chiefs of the government's armed forces and leaders of political parties.

Guillermo Ungo, candidate of the Democratic Convergence bloc, has called for support to the FMLN proposal.

Gen. Eugenio Vides Casanova, minister of defense, sharply criticized the FMLN plan February 7. "Honestly we do not think it is a serious proposal," he said. "We believe they are seeking to create divisions between the armed forces and the state, and internal divisions."

Nonetheless, Vides Casanova said, the military would support "any serious and honest decision" by the political leaders.

In addition to discussing the response to the FMLN election plan, Quayle hinted that the Salvadoran government's record of violating human rights could endanger congressional support for U.S. aid. The Salvadoran government has received \$3.5 billion in U.S. aid since 1984.

The Roman Catholic Church Legal Education Office in San Salvador reported that political killings by the army had risen by 28 percent last year. Death-squad assassinations were up 135 percent.

In what the January 29 *New York Times* termed "unusually blunt language," the U.S. State Department recently criticized

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Protests win release of Haitian refugees

BY LINDA JOYCE

MIAMI — Protests involving Black rights groups and religious leaders have succeeded in winning freedom for 15 Haitians unjustly detained here by the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS). Plans are under way to broaden the struggle, with a united demonstration to take place at the INS's Krome Avenue Detention Center next month.

On January 29 some 300 protesters, defying 60 cops in full riot gear, demanded freedom for the nearly 300 Haitians imprisoned at Krome Avenue. They accused the INS of discriminatory treatment of those fleeing political repression and economic hardship in Haiti.

For the first time, members of the Unrepresented People's Positive Action Council (UP-PAC) participated in a protest of discrimination against Haitians. The action was called by Veye-Yo (Watch Them), a Haitian community organization. UP-PAC is an important group in Miami's Black community.

Valerie Williams, administrator of the Haitian Refugee Center here, hailed this solidarity. "The plight of Haitians has struck a nerve in the consciousness of the



Husband and wife in separate compounds in Krome Avenue Detention Center in Miami.

Black-American community and other sympathetic groups," she said. "People are outraged and the demonstrations reflect an intense unified fighting spirit."

Solidarity with the plight of Haitian immigrants is also being voiced by a growing number of religious leaders. Last month, two dozen clergy issued a widely pub-

licized letter to INS District Director Perry Rivkind denouncing the INS's mistreatment of Haitians.

Protests continued after January 30, when the U.S. Coast Guard intercepted 149 Haitians jammed onto a small sailboat and deported all but six of those on board.

Gerard Jean-Juste, a leader of Veye-Yo and director of the Haitian Refugee Center, said at a UP-PAC forum on February 4, "The INS lied that the boat had not yet reached so-called U.S. territorial waters, then forcibly sent them back to Haiti, where they had been fleeing severe repression. They all asked for political asylum," he said.

UP-PAC President Betty Ferguson backed Jean-Juste's protest, "We must come together in huge numbers to stop this," she told the meeting. "We are going to continue to fight until this unequal treatment of Haitians stops. An injury to one is an injury to all!"

Under this pressure, Dade County officials who are Black issued a statement calling for an end to the interdiction and deportation of Haitians. They also called for issuance of work permits to Haitian refugees, a procedure that has been won for Nicaraguans as a result of earlier protests here.

Another victory was won February 2 when U.S. Congressman Claude Pepper introduced a bill that would require Coast Guard vessels intercepting Haitians at sea to bring the refugees to land for immigration interviews.

For more information on future united protests, call the Haitian Refugee Center at (305) 757-8538.

Miami: attempt to cover up racist killings

BY PAT WRIGHT

MIAMI — In an attempt to cool off the anger that led to an explosion here after a police killing of two Black men, city officials moved quickly to give the appearance of seeking justice. They wanted to minimize damage to this host city's image on the eve of the Superbowl weekend. But now the football game is over and life is returning to normal in Overtown and Liberty City.

The residents of these Black neighborhoods are indignant because it is becoming increasingly clear that a cover-up is in motion to deny justice in the January 16 killing by Miami policeman William Lozano of Clement Lloyd and Allan Blanchard.

On January 27, People United for Justice, an organization formed in the wake of the Overtown rebellion, picketed the office of State Attorney Janet Reno to protest her decision to charge Lozano with manslaughter instead of murder.

A manslaughter charge means that the prosecutors don't think there was anything premeditated or deliberate in Lozano's actions. In Florida, manslaughter with a firearm carries a maximum sentence of 30 years in prison. The maximum penalty in a first- or second-degree murder charge would be death or life imprisonment.

The charge "should have been murder," said Adina Lloyd, the mother of Lozano's victim. "That shooting wasn't a mistake. That was willfully done."

Witnesses to the shooting say Lozano fired from a combat stance as Lloyd's motorcycle went by. Lozano claims he

fired in self-defense as the vehicle swerved towards him. But witnesses say Lloyd's vehicle was heading straight and never crossed the centerline of the street. They also say Lozano gave no warning and took no other action to avoid any alleged danger from the motorcycle or to stop the vehicle. He clearly shot to kill.

Lozano was released on \$10,000 bail 28 minutes after being booked. He has been relieved of duty, with pay.

Meanwhile, the Independent Review Panel established by Miami Mayor Xavier Suarez to cool things off during the two days of revolt has been put on ice.

On January 27 Congressman John Conyers from Michigan attended a community hearing organized by the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. Some 150 participants voiced their anger at cop harassment and brutalization of Blacks in this city.

Patricia Lloyd, sister of the slain motorcyclist, protested the manslaughter charges. "This was cold-blooded murder," she said.

Gail Hall, a Miami police sergeant who is Black also spoke at the hearing. She complained of widespread racism in the department and reported that during the January rebellion she heard Latin officers saying, "Let's go kill some more niggers."

Two weeks after Miami exploded in response to the police killings, police in riot gear cordoned off streets in Tampa, 250 miles away, when angry crowds set fires and pelted cops with stones. The eruption was sparked by news that Edgar Allan

Price, a Black man, died after being subdued by six Tampa cops.

Police claim that Price died of a cocaine-related heart attack. Many residents, however, say he was severely beaten. A local TV station reported that Price might have suffocated while lying face down on the back seat of a police car.

Subscription renewal campaign for socialist publications gets going

BY NORTON SANDLER

Over the next few weeks we will be contacting thousands of readers around the world about extending their subscriptions.

This subscription renewal campaign is a follow-up to the international circulation drive at the end of last year when thousands of working people in the United States, Canada, Britain, Iceland, Sweden, New Zealand, Australia, and other countries were introduced to the *Militant* and the Spanish-language monthly *Perspectiva Mundial*.

Now that you have read the *Militant* or *PM* for several months, we are sure that many of you will agree that these publications provide news and analysis about world politics not available elsewhere.

Between now and March 11 supporters of the publications will be contacting you by mail, phone, or in person to discuss the periodicals. They will also introduce you to *New International*, a magazine of Marxist

politics and theory. This periodical goes into depth on many of the same topics covered in the *Militant*.

About half of the 9,000 subscriptions from the last drive have expired already. Many readers have responded to the notices mailed out by our business office and sent in a subscription extension.

In the first four weeks of 1989 alone our business office in New York received 204 renewals to the *Militant* and *PM*. Many are from first-time readers who sign up for another 12 weeks. A substantial number purchased six-month or one-year subscriptions.

Another 2,500 subscriptions are due to expire by March 11. Others expire later in the year.

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Coup in Paraguay as tyranny, poverty spark popular unrest

BY HARRY RING

Paraguay's new self-declared-president, Gen. Andrés Rodríguez, is moving quickly to consolidate his rule. In a successful military coup February 3, he toppled Gen. Alfredo Stroessner, who held Paraguay in chains since 1954.

At a February 6 news conference, Rodríguez said new elections would be held May 1 and indicated he would be available as the nominee of the Colorado Party, the century-old vehicle for capitalist political rule in Paraguay. Stroessner won seven rigged elections as the Colorado nominee.

Rodríguez said all opposition parties except the Communists would be permitted to participate in the elections.

A long-time associate of Stroessner's, Rodríguez comes to power at a time of developing popular unrest.

With the news that Stroessner had been toppled, a reported 5,000 people gathered in the streets of the capital city, Asunción, to celebrate.

Departing from traditional practice, the police did not attack them with clubs and tear gas, and kept at a distance.

Prior to the coup, a faction fight broke out within the Colorado Party, with some members of the ruling machine apparently realizing it was time to begin taking their distance from Stroessner. Reports indicate Rodríguez was among these.

Certainly, Rodríguez could not complain that he did not fare well under Stroessner. He is described as owning Paraguay's largest currency exchange, a brewery, cattle ranches, and shares in banks and construction companies.

This in a country that is one of the poorest in South America.

Low wages and chronic inflation prevail. Farmers are impoverished, with many functioning outside the cash economy.

Adobe huts with reed roofs and dirt floors are the common form of housing in the countryside. In the city, with a steady influx of landless farmers, the housing shortage is acute.

The repression and poverty have made for large-scale immigration. Many people have moved to neighboring countries, and some 200,000 Paraguayans now live in the United States. Census figures indicate only 4,000 of these have papers.

Once a Spanish colony, most of the population of 3.8 million are mestizo, a mixture of Indian and Spanish.

Catholicism is the official state religion and Spanish the official language. Spanish is the language used and taught in the schools even though 90 percent of the people speak, as their first language Guaraní, the language of their Indian ancestors.

In an article last April, a *Los Angeles Times* correspondent put it this way:

"Most Paraguayans are more comfortable with Guaraní than with Spanish. Yet Spanish is the language of the colonial conquerors, of social status, educational opportunity and economic power, while Guaraní is the language of the natives, of illiteracy, poverty, and failure."

Paraguay's political repression is harsh, with the police buttressing army rule.

Police chiefs are appointed by the president. The police in Asunción are charged with the responsibility for maintaining dossiers on the citizens of the entire country.

Several unions function, but strikes are illegal.

In 1978, Paraguay joined with Brazil, its principal economic and political ally, in constructing a huge hydroelectric dam on the Paraná River.

This provided a bonanza of lucrative contracts for Paraguay's ruling clique. But, until the basic structure was completed, it also provided jobs for 40,000 Paraguayans.

When the layoffs came, Paraguay was hit by a new economic slump.

The increased economic hardship, coupled with tyrannical rule, sparked new demands for democratization.

This was modestly reflected in last February's presidential election. Two opposition parties ran in the election, and the re-

gime credited them with 10 percent of the vote.

But other opposition parties urged people to either boycott the polls or, if they couldn't because they were government workers, to cast void ballots.

Even though people can be fined for not voting, it was estimated that as many as 20 percent of the electorate joined the boycott. The figure ran as high as 50 percent in some urban areas.

A *New York Times* correspondent reported that it was almost impossible to tell it was election day. The streets of Asunción were "silent and empty."

General Stroessner arrived at a polling place in a bulletproof limousine, accompanied by three truckloads of soldiers.

Last May peasants went on a hunger strike protesting human rights abuses.

And last December, 5,000 cops used cattle prods and clubs to prevent a human rights march in the capital.

The action had been initiated by unions, student groups, church activists, and opposition parties.

The first open antigovernment demon-



Gen. Andrés Rodríguez, new president of Paraguay.



strations in 30 years occurred in the spring of 1986.

In mid-March of that year, the leader of the banned Radical Liberal Party rallied a crowd of 800 in the capital. A week later he led a demonstration of 4,000.

In April, 500 members of a paramilitary force used whips, chains, and machetes to prevent thousands of supporters of the banned party from converging for a rally in the town of San José de los Arroyos.

The same month, some 500 workers at a state-operated hospital in Asunción staged a march for better pay. Cops dispersed them with clubs and firehoses.

A week later the cops broke up a march

of 4,000 hospital workers and supporters.

At the end of April, students at the University of Asunción staged a march to protest the closing of the law school. It had been shut down after students actively supported the striking medical workers.

In October 1987, opposition parties called for a protest march in the capital, and 30,000 people poured out. It was the biggest demonstration seen in Stroessner's entire period of rule.

At his post-coup press conference, General Rodríguez explained that the power grab had developed because "in recent times Stroessner was not producing good results."

Miners' union postpones Pittston strike

BY SUSAN LaMONT

The United Mine Workers of America announced January 31 that it will postpone for at least one month a strike against the Pittston Coal Group, the largest U.S. coal exporter.

The governors of Kentucky, West Virginia, and Virginia had issued a last-minute plea for the UMW not to strike.

Some 2,000 mine union members employed at 20 coal mines operated by Pittston in the three states have been working without a contract since the old agreement with Pittston expired Feb. 1, 1988. The mines produce metallurgical coal for steelmaking.

On Feb. 8, 1988, the mine union ratified a new five-year agreement with the Bituminous Coal Operators Association covering 60,000 UMW miners. A few days later, Pittston announced it would not sign the new BCOA pact. The UMW leadership instructed its members to remain on the job instead of striking, however, while negotiations with Pittston continued.

After the company broke off talks last November, union officials said the UMW would strike Pittston on January 31.

Negotiations resumed January 11 after Pittston agreed to the union negotiators' request for mediation. Union and company representatives disagree on who should act as mediators, however, and mediated talks have not yet begun.

"Pittston's strategy is clear," said UMW President Richard Trumka in the December 1988 *UMW Journal*. "The company wants a strike for two reasons. First, they would like to break the UMW and

run their operations nonunion. And, failing that, they are hoping that a strike will shift attention away from the way the top company officials have mismanaged the corporation."

The union's efforts to reach an agreement with Pittston have centered on a "corporate campaign," which has included speaking at Pittston stockholders' meetings, picketing banks that lend the company money, and lobbying other corporate boards of directors that Pittston Chairman Paul Douglas is a member of. "The companies have changed, so we've had to change," Trumka told the *Wall Street Journal* recently.

The December 1988 *UMW Journal* reported a recent decision by the union's International Executive Board to urge all local unions and districts to get involved in the campaign against Pittston by pressuring banks where local or district funds are deposited to quit using Brink's Inc. armored cars and withdrawing union funds if banks fail to respond. Brink's is owned by Pittston.

On the same day the strike postponement was announced, the UMW also reported that the UMW and Bakery, Confectionery, and Tobacco Workers union pension funds were withdrawing \$30 million from Crestar Financial Corp., a Virginia-based bank. Crestar, with a deposit base of \$7.98 billion, is one of five banks that extended a \$100 million line of credit to Pittston in December 1987. The union called this credit line Pittston's "strike fund."

The UMW has also joined a coalition of Washington, D.C., community groups in filing a complaint against Crestar with

the Federal Reserve Board for discriminatory lending policies.

Last May and June, union members shut down Pittston's operations with two memorial work stoppages, aimed at forcing the company to negotiate seriously. Miners' spouses have organized women's auxiliaries, which have joined with retired miners to raise funds, hold protests, and seek solidarity in the mining communities.

When the old agreement expired last February, Pittston cut off health benefits to 1,500 pensioners, surviving spouses, and disabled former workers. The company also refused to make payments into the UMW Health and Retirement Fund, eliminated arbitration of grievances, and stopped union dues check-off. Last April the UMW Health and Retirement Funds filed a lawsuit against Pittston for its refusal to pay pension and health-benefit contributions.

The February 1988 agreement with the BCOA included a modest wage increase and expanded recall rights (panel rights) at other mines owned by the same company. This includes a BCOA member company's nonunion mines, where three out of five jobs openings are to be filled by UMW members.

The contract also calls for extending full union hiring rights to any portion of a company's operation that it leases out during the life of the contract.

It is the expanded panel and union hiring rights that Pittston has refused to go along with. "Potentially, Pittston could shut down its union mines, reopen them under a different name and wipe out its entire union work force," Trumka explained to the *Wall Street Journal*.



March 1988 protest in Lebanon, Virginia, demanded Pittston restore pension benefits and negotiate with coal union.

Militant/Kathleen Mickells

Hollywood director to do documentary on Curtis

Mark Curtis is a unionist and political activist from Des Moines, Iowa, who is serving 25 years in jail on frame-up charges of rape and burglary. The Mark Curtis Defense Committee is leading an international political campaign to fight for justice for Curtis. To contact the committee, write Box 1048, Des Moines, Iowa 50311. Telephone (515) 246-1695.

"Des Moines political activist Mark Curtis may soon be the subject of a Hollywood movie. A director is reportedly interested in Curtis' story. In November Curtis

"Well, the Mark Curtis story may be coming soon to a theater near you," the reporter continued, with more than a touch of exaggeration. Shots of Curtis testifying at his trial last September, and a collage of "Free Mark Curtis" buttons were flashed on the screen.

The cameras then cut to an interview with Wendol Jarvis, manager of the Iowa Film Office. "I think some of the national attention that it provided piqued the curiosity of the director. And so what he'll be doing is coming to Iowa to get some information to find out if there's a story there."

Then TV viewers were shown



Militant/Ruth Nebbia
Jane and Stanton Curtis, Mark Curtis' parents, were interviewed at New Mexico conference on Central America in January. Forty-six participants became endorsers of defense effort.

Iowa Film Office Manager Jarvis had indicated that the police department "is receptive to the idea and has been cooperating fully on the project."

Jane Curtis, Mark Curtis' mother, received a warm round of applause when she appealed for support in the fight for justice for her son. She was addressing participants at a Southwest regional conference of Central America activists held in Bernalillo, New Mexico, January 21-22. More than 200 people attended.

Curtis supporters from Santa Fe, New Mexico, and Phoenix staffed an information table and showed a video of Curtis' trial during the conference. Forty-six people signed endorser cards, and \$85 was donated.

Curtis activists were invited to speak at the February 11 meeting of the Albuquerque Border City Project on Immigration Law Enforcement Monitoring; and the pastor of a Lutheran church that has provided sanctuary to Central American refugees invited committee activists to set up a table and speak at his church on February 19.

Jane and Stanton Curtis, Mark's parents, were also interviewed by Community Access Cable Channel 27.

Ruth Nebbia from Phoenix contributed to this column.

DEFEND MARK CURTIS!

was sentenced to 25 years in prison for sexual assault and burglary."

This was the beginning of a Channel 8 television news report in Des Moines January 25 on Nick Castle Jr.'s decision to film a documentary on the Curtis frame-up. Castle has written and directed several movies, including the newly released feature *Tap* starring Gregory Hines. He visited Des Moines in mid-January and begin filming on February 8.

"Remember Mark Curtis? He's the Des Moines man who became nationally known last year when he accused Des Moines police of beating him because he's a political activist.

scenes of Curtis and his supporters last year delivering protest petitions to the county prosecutor's office, and Curtis speaking to the media after the verdict was announced in his trial.

Also displayed was a center-spread article from the *Bulletin* newspaper, which is published by a group called the Workers League, headlined, "The Strange Case of Mark Curtis." The Workers League is on an aggressive international campaign to discredit Curtis and the defense committee.

"Twenty-nine-year-old Mark Curtis is serving a 25-year sentence at Anamosa prison after a jury found him guilty of trying to rape a 15-year-old Des Moines girl last

March," the Channel 8 reporter explained. "Curtis claimed then and still believes police framed him and beat him up after his arrest.

"Curtis' case gained widespread attention when the Mark Curtis Defense Committee organized and letters of support poured in from all over the country. Curtis told us by telephone from Anamosa that

he hopes the movie director will listen to his side of the story."

"My interest in it will be that it tells the truth," Curtis told Channel 8, "that it tells the whole story, which I think that people in this country need to hear about."

The newscaster said that Des Moines Police Chief William Moulder was out of town and could not be reached for comment, but that

Los Angeles, New York: Curtis rallies raise \$9,000

BY BOB SCHWARZ

NEW YORK — "It's clear that the packinghouse bosses in the Midwest and their political servants view any class-conscious worker, any worker who is fighting for better wages and working conditions, as a threat. But someone like Mark Curtis is clearly a special threat, because he's the kind of person who fights not only around the economic issues but fights against racism, against sexism, and for international working-class solidarity."

With those words attorney Margaret Winter opened the February 4 New York rally to defend frame-up victim Mark Curtis. Sponsored by the Militant Labor Forum, the gathering was co-chaired by Denis Stephano, financial secretary of Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers union Local 8-234 in Chester, Pennsylvania.

The rally was attended by several hundred unionists, students, and political activists, mainly from New York, Boston, Newark, and Philadelphia. On the same

evening nearly 120 people attended a Curtis defense rally in Los Angeles. Both meetings were held in conjunction with regional political conferences sponsored by the Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialist Alliance.

The featured speaker at the New York rally was John Gaige, national farm director for the Socialist Workers Party and the SWP organizer in Des Moines, Iowa, where Curtis was framed up on rape and burglary charges last March. At the time of his arrest, Curtis was participating in the defense of 17 Latino workers arrested several days earlier by U.S. immigration agents in a raid at the Swift packinghouse where he worked.

Explaining the importance of the fight to defend Curtis, Gaige said, "This is a political struggle over who we are and what we stand for. If we lose this fight, the class enemy gains real ground against the vanguard in the working class. We lose some of our integrity as political activists; it'll be easier for them to slander, degrade, and frame us.

"But I don't think we can lose if we fight to reach out, if we fight to organize, and if we don't lose our nerve," Gaige stressed.

"And if we win it — which I'm convinced we can do — we open up the road for solidarity with other fighters, for other victims, for workers and farmers and progressive causes around the world."

Stephano told the audience that he met Mark in August 1988 at the oil workers' convention in Florida. "Meeting Mark, discussing the case, and talking about it with other members of the SWP," he said, "convinced me and other members of our local that Mark indeed was framed up, that the charges were false. Since that time, his trial was held and Mark was sent to jail for 25 years. At the trial, information was withheld, evidence withheld that he couldn't present. This has reinforced my thoughts that Mark was indeed framed. That's why I support Mark, I'll continue to support Mark, and that's why we're here tonight."

A number of prominent individuals attended the meeting, including Jersey City, New Jersey, City Council member Jaime Vasquez. Vasquez introduced a resolution in support of Curtis adopted by the council last fall.

Also present were Madeline Arterberg of Ventana, an artists' group that organizes solidarity with Nicaragua, and Beverly Treumann, executive director of the Nica School in Estelí, Nicaragua. Representatives of Socialist Action and the Freedom Socialist Party spoke during the discussion in support of the Curtis defense campaign.

Valorie Caffee, president of the New Jersey Anti-Apartheid Mobilization Coalition and a staff organizer for the Communications Workers of America; David Burgess, executive director of Newark's Metropolitan Ecumenical Ministries; and Essex County, New Jersey, National Organization for Women co-coordinators Connie Gilbert-Neiss and Carol Vasile sent messages that were read to the rally.

Greetings from Puerto Rican independence fighter Nelson Ramirez were also read. "I send this solidarity message for all political prisoners in the United States, buried alive in the jails of this country. I was just released from a maximum-security prison after seven months for refusing to cooperate with an investigation that seeks to hold back the just struggle of the Puerto Rican people for their independence and self-determination. At this very moment there are hundreds of political prisoners," Ramirez wrote.

"To Mark I say: You will never be alone. The people are watchful and keep informed of your situation. Trust in the ability, imagination, and creativity of the masses in their ability to overcome any situation, no matter how difficult. Stay strong."

A fund appeal netted more than \$1,000 toward an international goal of \$60,000 to be raised for defense committee expenses in the next few months.

The meeting in Los Angeles was chaired by Rajen Govander, president of the South African International Student Congress in southern California.

James Warren, SWP national organization secretary, was the featured speaker. Messages to the meeting were read from R.T. Griffin, president of the Arizona Central Labor Council, and James Kimes, president of an American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees local in Phoenix.

Nearly \$8,000 was raised in contributions and pledges for the Curtis defense committee fund appeal, including \$5,000 from a longshore worker.

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Afghanistan: Why Soviet intervention ended in defeat

BY FRED FELDMAN

The withdrawal of the last of the Soviet troops from Afghanistan marks the defeat of a 10-year military campaign to prop up the regime of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan.

Prior to the arrival of Soviet troops, Afghanistan was a country of 20 million people that was ranked among the poorest in the world. The average life span was 40 years. Infant mortality was 18 percent, and half of all children died before the age of five. Only 8 percent of the population was literate, and only 2 percent of school-age youth were in schools. Annual per capita income averaged \$160.

Afghan peasants — some 80 percent of the labor force — labored under semifeudal conditions. To rent land and obtain seeds, animals, and equipment, they sold shares of the coming crop to landlords. More than 95 percent of Afghans are Muslims, and sections of the Islamic hierarchy — which includes many landlords — were prime beneficiaries of this system.

In the 1970s growing social unrest challenged the traditional rulers. In 1973 a popularly supported revolt ended the monarchy, and Mohammed Daud, a member of the royal family, became president of the republic. He initially named several members of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) to his cabinet.

Formed in 1965 by educated middle-class radicals, the PDPA became a pole of attraction for young people, workers, military officers, and others who sought to change the old order. The PDPA developed ties with the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and with other Communist parties in the region. With only a few thousand members, the PDPA had no significant base among the peasants — the great majority of the population — or the very small number of wage workers.

Dissatisfaction grew as Daud opposed democratic reforms and stepped up repression against critics, including removing the PDPA from the government and arresting its leaders. On April 27, 1978, the PDPA, backed by its supporters in the army, overthrew Daud.

Program of social reforms

Nur Mohammed Taraki became president, and a program of social reforms was announced — including land redistribution, a literacy campaign, construction of schools, and a ban on child marriage. Thousands of political prisoners were released. Such measures could have advanced a democratic revolution in Afghanistan.

Initially, the regime enjoyed significant popular support. However, instead of organizing and mobilizing workers, peasants, and other toiling people to struggle against their oppression, the PDPA regime attempted to impose sweeping reforms by administrative decrees — and, when this met landlord-backed resistance, by force.

Although tens of thousands of land titles were handed out and the abolition of usury proclaimed, the peasants were not organized to defend, extend, or consolidate these measures. No avenue was provided for obtaining the seed, animals, and credit that the landlords had controlled.

The literacy campaign was compulsory, and physical force was sometimes used to assemble villagers for classes.

When landlord-backed units began waging an armed struggle against the regime, the government responded with savage violence, including bombings, against villages where the rightists were believed to have support. Thousands of Soviet advisers arrived to spur on the counterinsurgency effort.

The PDPA regime was torn by factionalism. In September 1979, Taraki was murdered and replaced as president by Hafizullah Amin.

As the rightists gained backing and the regime disintegrated, thousands of Soviet troops poured into Afghanistan in December 1979. Amin was ousted and executed, and Babrak Karmal became president. Karmal had been in exile in Czechoslovakia. The number of Soviet troops eventually reached some 115,000.

The arrival of Soviet troops to keep the discredited regime in power was a violation of the Afghan peoples' right to national sovereignty and contributed to broadening support for the rightist-led opposition.

The U.S. government and other imperialist powers seized on the Soviet move to step up aid to the rightist groups. In 1986, the rightist forces obtained \$400 million in direct aid from the U.S. government. The following year, they got \$600 million.

Other aid was funnelled through Pakistan, which received \$3 billion from Washington between 1982 and 1986, and was voted another \$4 billion for the following six years.

While attempting at times to assuage the landlords, mullahs, and other reactionary foes of the government, the Afghan government and Soviet forces continued the brutal methods that had already turned the masses of Afghans against the regime.

12,000 villages destroyed

The Soviet forces came to rely more and more on the massive use of air power. When the war began, according to Assam Gul of the Agricultural Survey of Afghanistan project, there were 22,000 vil-

Continued from front page

lages in the country. By 1985, some 12,000 had reportedly been destroyed, and another 5,000 had been badly damaged.

The rightists also carried out acts of savagery. Most recent has been the lobbing of shells into civilian areas of Kabul, resulting in scores of casualties.

An estimated 1 million people have died, and another 5 million have fled into exile. More than 3 million of these have gone to Pakistan, where the Pakistani, U.S. and other governments provide the rightists with extensive bases and other support. Another 2 million are in Iran.

The Soviet government says that 15,000 of its soldiers were killed.

In 1986, Karmal was replaced by Najibullah. With Soviet backing, Najibullah stepped up efforts to end the war. In early 1987, he announced a unilateral six-month cease-fire and offered an amnesty to rebel forces.

severe winter in 16 years, are now threatened by hunger and disease.

"There used to be 1.1 million people in Kabul. Now there are 2.2 million," Rupert quoted Steffan de Mistura, director of Operation Salam, a UN-organized relief program in Kabul, as saying. "One million of these are displaced. They have no jobs, no purchasing power, no proper housing."

Malnutrition

A doctor at the city's Indira Gandhi Children's Hospital told Rupert, "Three years ago 62 percent of the children were malnourished. We think it now may be 80 percent, and it is increasing day by day."

"The war is affecting everything," he said. "We cannot give vaccinations except in Kabul. We cannot even get to nearby villages. We have nothing left in the hospital."

Rupert reported that "children have been coming into the hospital with increasing signs of acute diarrhea, inability to withstand the cold, and low blood sugar." He described seeing hospitalized children, with withered limbs and sagging skin due to malnutrition.

Siege of Kabul

Afghan President Najibullah addressed a February 5 rally in Kabul of several thousand supporters of the government. "God is with us, the people are with us, we cannot lose the war," he proclaimed.

Najibullah's government stated February 7 that up to 30,000 members of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan, which has dominated the government since 1978, have been armed to keep order in the city and to resist a siege.

At the end of January heavy fighting, including Soviet bombing, was reported along the Salang Highway that links Kabul to the Soviet Union. The Afghan army has warned peasants living near the highway to leave the area. Salang is the main supply route into Kabul.

Soviet government spokesman Gennadi Gerasimov reported February 7 that 30,000 antigovernment guerrillas have been mobilized to attack the roads leading from the cities of Kabul and Herat.

Fuel and food shortages are widespread, and prices of basic necessities are soaring out of reach of many Kabul residents.

At least 350,000 people, including 30,000 children in Kabul, facing the most



Antigovernment Afghan guerrilla holds U.S.-supplied antiaircraft missile launcher.

When this effort failed, the Soviet government stepped up efforts to obtain an international agreement, arranged through the United Nations, that would make it possible to speedily and safely withdraw troops.

On Feb. 8, 1988, Soviet television carried Communist Party head Mikhail Gorbachev's announcement of a plan for the withdrawal of all Soviet forces by March 15, 1989, provided an agreement was reached including the Pakistani and Afghan governments.

Gorbachev stressed that Soviet troops would withdraw whether or not a cease-fire was reached between the Afghan government and the rebels.

On April 14, 1988, a pact was signed by the governments of Afghanistan, Pakistan, the Soviet Union, and the United States. The pact required the completion of the withdrawal of troops by February 15.

UN officials have announced plans to airlift and convoy aid for Kabul's population.

In the fall, however, a UN convoy bringing aid to the region north of Kabul was ambushed by antigovernment forces, who took several officials hostage. The Soviet government has been airlifting and conveying supplies to the city.

On February 5 Sibgatullah Majadidi, the head of the coalition of seven rightist organizations based in Pakistan, stated the group would soon set up a coalition council to replace the Afghan government headed by President Najibullah.

The government of Pakistan is sponsoring a February 10 meeting for this purpose.

Negotiations are taking place to forge a united bloc among the antigovernment groups based in Pakistan and the eight groups based in Iran. In addition, at least one additional rightist group is sponsored by Saudi Arabia.

On February 6 Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze left Pakistan after an unsuccessful effort to persuade the rightists to include leaders of the Najibullah regime in a coalition government.

work being done by Cubans to meet the social needs of the people.

Pattie Sanchez, a representative of the Socialist Workers Party, discussed the rectification process now going on in Cuba. She said this is what the Cuban Communist Party refers to as leading working people to take charge of their country, correct errors, and develop work in a politically conscious way, including participation in voluntary labor. "Cuba is in a battle to deepen socialism at a time when the major media of the world is trying to discredit socialism and pose capitalist methods as the only way to solve problems," she explained.

Also speaking at the celebration was Kenyon Stebbins, professor of anthropology at West Virginia University. He detailed the achievements of Cuba in the past 30 years, especially relative to other Latin American countries. He paid special tribute to the advances in medical care, which he described as now being on par with many of the most advanced countries of the world.

The meeting was sponsored by the Militant Labor Forum.

February 17, 1989 The Militant 5

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Sandinista gov't says land seizure will end

Continued from front page

tions, Ortega said. There is ample land in areas previously closed off to farming due to the contra war. Since the war is now over, he said, these lands can be put into use. In addition, he stated, many existing cooperative farms have space for more members.

In addition to declaring an end to land takeovers, the government has offered concessions to capitalists who have been demanding an end to the state monopoly of exports of agricultural products.

Growers of crops for export now must sell their products to the state. The government pays the growers part of the price of their product in "dollar incentives" and part in córdobas, Nicaragua's currency.

The government then allocates the hard currency it earns from these exports to pay for imports it judges necessary, and to service the nation's foreign debt.

Among those most vociferous in demanding the right to export their product directly have been the cattlemen. It is not unknown for ranchers to illegally drive herds across the borders into Honduras and Costa Rica, where they can sell the cattle for dollars.

In recent negotiations, the government has agreed for the first time to authorize ranchers to directly export some purebred cattle. The cattlemen have said they will invest the dollar income in improving their herds.

Privatized meat-packing

In related discussions, government officials are negotiating with ranchers over a state-owned meat-packing plant in Managua. The ranchers want to reopen the plant with private capital and the right to export its products. The business would be run as a producers' cooperative by the ranchers.

Cattlemen affiliated to the National Union of Farmers and Ranchers (UNAG) have also been seeking permission to take over several other export-quality slaughterhouses under similar arrangements.

According to press reports, Wheelock has also negotiated an agreement with the Pellas family, former owners of the giant San Antonio sugar mill, which was taken over by the government last year. Under the terms of the settlement, the government will pay compensation for the mill in the form of an undisclosed percentage of the sugar produced each year, which the Pel-

lases will be allowed to sell directly on the international market.

The reported accord also includes a pledge by the government not to nationalize the Pellas profitable Flor de Caña rum company, a move that had earlier been threatened.

Further concessions sought

Not satisfied with the concessions announced already, businessmen are pushing for more. At a recent meeting of UNAG's national council here, well-to-do farmers and ranchers argued for a "new agrarian reform law."

A position paper submitted by UNAG officials for discussion argued for the abolition of the current agrarian reform tribunals, which are administered by the Ministry of Agrarian Development and Reform. These courts would be replaced with new panels that would include representatives of the landowners.

The UNAG paper called on the government to "respect and guarantee private property" and said that the demands of landless peasants can be met by existing state lands.

Some council members called for legalizing the renting of farm land. Several also urged the government to sell some land owned by state farms to private ranchers.

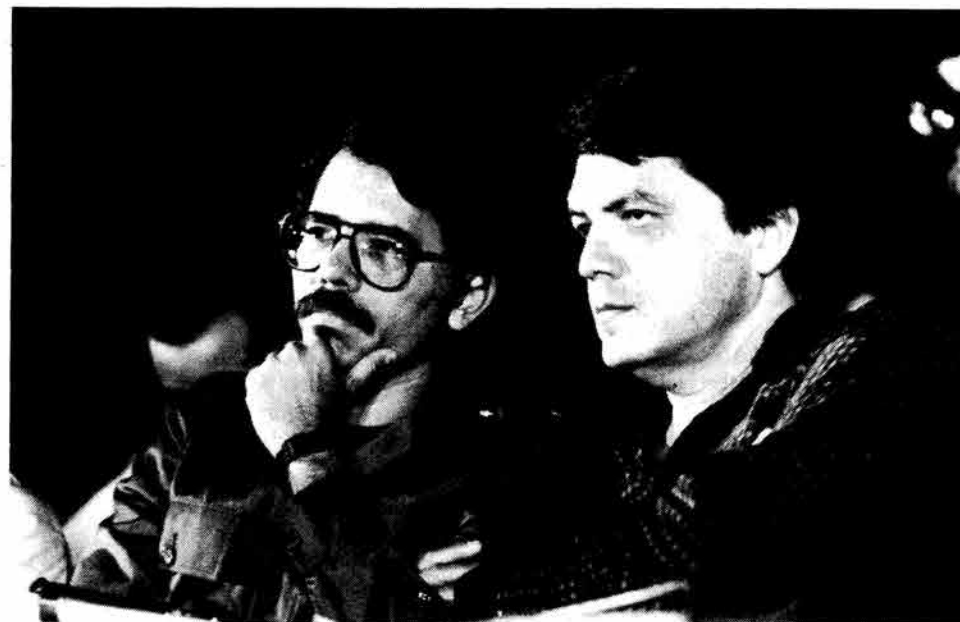
'No accord,' says opposition

For their part, officers of the Superior Council of Private Enterprise (COSEP), who speak for many of the country's large capitalists, held a news conference February 3 to deny "rumors" that an accord had been reached with the Sandinista government. "There is no concrete plan," said Ramiro Gudián, COSEP president.

Gudián said that COSEP representatives had held meetings with Wheelock, with Vice-president Sergio Ramírez, and with Minister of the Economy Luis Carrion. "We are going to continue attending these meetings because we want to listen," he stated. Nonetheless, Gudián said, the Sandinistas have yet to show a "serious" attitude in the talks.

Gudián demanded complete "freedom of foreign trade." What is needed, he added, is not just a halt in confiscations, but a return of nationalized property to private capital.

"Throughout Latin America, in Europe,



Nicaraguan President Ortega with Vice-president Sergio Ramírez, who has been meeting with representatives of country's large capitalists on possible accord.

even in Russia, there is a process of privatization of businesses," Gudián argued. "But not in Nicaragua. It doesn't make sense."

New budget cuts

According to government figures, the country's foreign exchange earnings fell to \$267 million last year. This figure is 10 percent below 1987 and 40 percent lower than 1980.

In his January 30 speech, President Ortega announced a series of new austerity measures. There will be sharp government spending reductions in all areas, including education and health care.

The cuts will also mean new layoffs, costing 35,000 jobs. The army is to be reduced by 10,000, and Ministry of the Interior forces by 13,000. Twelve thousand employees of government ministries and state-owned factories and farms will also be dismissed.

The alternative for laid-off workers, Ortega said, will be to take jobs in the countryside, where there is a farm-labor shortage.

In addition, there will be no higher minimum wage or across-the-board wage increases. The Sandinista Workers Federation and other unions have been calling for such measures in the face of runaway inflation.

Wage raises should only be granted, Ortega said, if there is an increase "in productivity of the worker and, of course, of the company."

Because of "domestic and international conditions," the country needs a "concerted effort between the working people, the producers, and the state to save the economy, to consolidate and develop the system of the mixed economy," the president said.

The only alternative to seeking such an accord, Ortega asserted, would be the imposition of a "war economy." "Everyone knows what this would mean: total rationing and total intervention of the state in all production and distribution of resources."

However, Ortega added, "the fact that we utilize market mechanisms, the fact that we utilize financial levers, is not to consolidate or develop a capitalist system in our country, but to develop a system in which the wealth is distributed fairly."

The Nicaraguan leader elaborated on this theme in a recent interview with *Time* magazine, which was reprinted here by the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) daily *Barricada*.

"Now is not the time to establish socialism," Ortega told the U.S. magazine. "We're convinced that our model should not be the countries of Eastern Europe or Cuba."

"The proper example for Nicaragua, he went on, would be the Scandinavian countries," *Time* magazine states. "They're small, they have a heavy emphasis on social programs, the state has a role in the economy, but so does the private sector," Ortega said.

Reaction from labor movement

There has been little direct public response from the labor movement to the new policies.

One pro-FSLN union leader, who preferred not to be identified, expressed concern about the moves toward more private foreign trade. If expanded, these "might be a problem," he said.

"We think foreign trade should stay as it

is," he said in an interview. "It is an instrument the government has that enables it to redistribute earnings. To denationalize foreign trade would be a step backward."

But most pro-FSLN union leaders are seeking ways to present their proposals and demands within the "accord" framework.

Leaders of both the Sandinista Workers Federation (CST) and the Rural Workers Association (ATC) have responded to the new layoffs with renewed calls for organizing a large-scale movement of working people from Managua to the countryside, where there are farm jobs as well as opportunities to join collective farms and cooperatives.

But to be successful, many of them believe, such a project would need both an investment of financial resources and a political and social effort to inspire and mobilize working people to participate. According to union leaders, up until now neither the government nor the FSLN has thrown active support behind the effort.

"One of our concrete proposals is that the revolutionary government resolutely support and promote the sending of working people and professionals to the countryside," Donald Silva, a CST leader, explained.

"There should be a government orientation, an orientation of the party, and of all the mass organizations," he added, "that this task should become a great movement supported by everyone, so that the country can move forward."

Collective bargaining

For the ATC, the policy of "accord" means negotiating collective bargaining agreements with the employers. "The union contract is the best instrument the workers have to reach an accord with the employers," according to Francisco Cano, secretary of international relations for the union.

The ATC is concentrating contract talks on three points. These are: that the employers invest their profits to maintain and increase production and jobs on their farms; that the bosses pay a guaranteed minimum wage; and that "the right to organize" be secured.

"Some employers think that the unions are going to disappear from their farms, or that the Sandinista Front is going to silence the unions that it influences," the ATC leader explained. But that is not what the "accord" policy means, he stated.

"If an employer doesn't pay a living wage, if he is not efficient and de-capitalizes the farm, the workers are going to denounce him," the ATC leader said.

To illustrate his point, Cano cited the example of an ATC local on a private farm in Matagalpa Province. The local is demanding that the government confiscate the farm, known as La Hérída.

The union accuses the owner of paying low wages, cutting back production, and violating the union contract. In addition, according to the ATC, the owner had a union organizer arrested and jailed. "He's not only the boss of the farm, he's virtually the boss of the police," said Cano.

Is there a conflict between the union's demand for confiscation of the farm and President Ortega's vow to end confiscations? Cano says there is not.

The union has the right to call for confiscation, he said, but ultimately it is the government that will decide. "The state has to be a conciliator," he added. "That's its role."

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FSLN leader on nat'l unity in Nicaragua

The following are excerpts from an interview with Víctor Tirado, one of the nine members of the National Directorate of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN). The interview, appeared in the January 29 and 30 editions of *El Nuevo Diario*, a pro-Sandinista daily published in Managua. The translation is by the Militant.

Question. For Nicaragua, 1989 began with a bang. The government confirmed elections for 1990, insisted on the reestablishment of relations with the United States, and took concrete steps to strengthen National Unity with private businessmen. Does national liberation, the objective of the FSLN, require in this stage consolidating this National Front?

Answer. Of course. National Unity implies a stage of transformations in which all of the economic forces and social sectors of the country are under pressure, as long as the transformations coincide with a stage of development and economic growth that will be as favorable for them as for us.

Everywhere, countries such as ours should implement this unity, so as not to get mixed up and make mistakes. All of these forces must be clear about this unity to be able to win economic victories. It is a law.

Q. Is a concrete accord conceivable between the state and private employers, in relation to certain areas of production and sectors of economic life?

A. Definitely. It can be done. It is the first great stage of the national revolution. Once we are at the level of the developed countries, then the contradictions will pass to another plane. But we should not develop contradictions that do not exist and say that we are going toward economic development by ourselves. We would be making a mistake if we said that.

When the project is consolidated and this stage is completed, contradictions will arise and take another road. Then it will be determined if socialism, capitalism, or whatever is wanted.

Q. Does this mean it is impossible to implement a "socialism of poverty"?

A. Exactly. Socialism arises out of wealth, out of development. And that's when the most important social classes will be contesting. It is important to be clear that we will not see this, not even at the beginning of the 21st century.

The foundations have to be created to head in that direction. Not understanding this would mean we are incapable of understanding the experiences of other countries that tried to speed up the historical process because they wanted to see it, they wanted to enjoy it. But this is impossible.

Q. This proposal for an accord implies a multiclass effort. But won't there be a risk, in the course of clashes between sectors, that the popular sectors — workers, peasants, etc. — which the FSLN has a strategic orientation toward — will suffer negative consequences, and will have to live through a long, bad period?

A. I don't think that the situation is going to get complicated. Take the agrarian reform as an example. To reach an accord with them an understanding must be found. How extensive should the role of the state be? How extensive should the role of private business be? How extensive should the role of the workers be? To establish the limits. We are going to take responsibility for the workers, make sure they live well.

The battle that will be waged now is for the long term. For the time being everything that advances economic development is always going to demand a convergence of all the sectors.

In times of crisis and in times of abundance, the state is going to have a direct role. When is the opposite going to occur? My bet is when things advance economically. Maybe when the state has already played the role of defender of the interests of the workers and they defend themselves on their own.

I am speaking of a very long-term plan. And I think that today the contradictions can be managed because the protagonists, the workers, are in the country. They exist.

The facts on Nicaragua's land reform

BY LARRY SEIGLE

MANAGUA, Nicaragua — The government's promise to end expropriations of capitalist farms and ranches, announced here at the end of January, comes after two years in which such takeovers were becoming less and less frequent.

In 1986 the government took over 460 properties under the provisions of the agrarian reform law. In 1987 this figure declined to 150. In 1988 it dropped to only six.

The decrease in the number of capitalist farms expropriated by the government coincides with a drop in the number of landless peasant families receiving their own land to work.

In 1986, 16,005 peasant families got land. Some received their own farms, others obtained land as part of cooperatives or collective farms. In 1987 this figure declined to 9,300. The government has not made public the corresponding figure for 1988, but there is no doubt that it will show a substantial further drop.

Since the 1979 overthrow of the dictatorship that ruled Nicaragua in the interests of the capitalists and landlords, nearly 80,000 peasant families have received land. An additional 40,000 peasant families received titles to the land they had been farming as squatters.

At an estimated average of six individuals per family, this means that more than 700,000 people, out of a population of some 3.5 million, have benefitted directly from the land reform program of the workers' and peasants' government.

However, many peasants still don't have land from which they can derive a livelihood. No current government estimate is available, but early in 1987 the figure was put at 60,000 families.

At the time of the 1979 revolution the government confiscated all property owned by the dictator Anastasio Somoza and his close associates. This put 20 percent of the nation's farm and ranch land in state hands.

Some of these properties were used to set up state farms. Much of the rest has been distributed to landless peasants. The state now holds 13 percent of agricultural land.

From 1981 to 1988, confiscations of capitalist holdings under the agrarian reform law affected another 8 percent of Nicaraguan agricultural land.

Today, capitalist farmers and ranchers hold about 9 percent of the land. But they have a much greater weight in the economy than this figure alone would indicate. This is because capitalist businesses are overwhelmingly in the crucial agro-export sector and because their modern farms and ranches have significantly higher labor productivity than small peasant farms. There is no upper limit on property holdings in Nicaragua.

According to Alonso Porras, director of agrarian reform, "the big owners who remain in Nicaragua are in the majority those who have been working and who are prepared to keep on working in the country within the framework that the government has established." Porras made his comments in an interview with *Barricada*, published by the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN).

The fight for a thoroughgoing land reform law was a central goal of the revolutionary struggle, led by the FSLN, that succeeded in bringing the workers' and farmers' government to power in 1979.

The state has an important function, and the private sector must understand this.

Q. At the start of this discussion you said that the National Unity the FSLN advocates — and which becomes in these days a decisive feature of the Nicaraguan process — is an essential element of Sandinismo. Does this imply that the answers that are being implemented in this stage are similar to the historic positions of the FSLN and of Carlos Fonseca?

A. Completely. Sandinismo is a doctrine of modern Latin American revolutionary thought. And I say Latin American because its essence is economic and political inde-

pendence, in other words, total independence. In this continent, since World War II, some independent countries have developed, making efforts to recover their economic independence. And it has been very difficult because subordination to the United States is very deep, and it has not left us the initiative to create our own alternative.

The Sandinista doctrine conceives of the unity of all of Latin America to achieve real economic independence. Sandinismo points in that direction. Its whole strategy is aimed at advancing Latin American unity, Latin American economic development, and Latin American cultural, artistic, and political thought.



Santo Tomás, Nicaragua, 1983. Farmers received titles to land under agrarian reform law.

The Sandinistas' approach to the peasants' struggle for land was spelled out in the FSLN's *Historic Program*, which was drafted by Carlos Fonseca and published in 1969.

Under the heading, "The Agrarian Revolution," the program details the policies to be implemented by the revolution:

"A. It will expropriate and eliminate the capitalist and feudal latifundios.

"B. It will turn over the land to the peasants, free of charge, in accordance with the principles that the land should belong to those who work it.

"C. It will carry out an agricultural development plan aimed at diversifying and increasing the productivity of that sector.

"D. It will guarantee the peasants the following rights:

1. Timely and adequate agricultural credit.

2. Marketing (a guaranteed market for their products).

3. Technical assistance.

"E. It will protect the patriotic landowners who collaborate with the guerrilla struggle by paying them for their landholdings that exceed the limits established by the revolutionary government.

"F. It will stimulate and encourage the peasants to organize themselves in cooperatives, so they can take their destiny into their own hands and directly participate in the development of the country.

"G. It will abolish the debt the peasantry incurred to the landlord and any type of usurer.

"H. It will eliminate the forced idleness that exists for most of the year in the countryside, and it will ensure the creation of sources of jobs for the rural population."

The text of the *Historic Program* is included in Pathfinder's collection *Sandinistas Speak*, available for \$6.95 at all Pathfinder bookstores.

Pathfinder titles available in Recording for Blind library

Some 70,000 educational books have been made available on tape by Recording for the Blind, the largest lending library in the world offering this service. Included are 24 titles from Pathfinder, an international publisher of books and pamphlets relating to working-class history and revolutionary struggles.

Recording for the Blind is a national organization that provides the books free on loan to those who cannot read standard printed material because of visual, physical, or perceptual handicaps.

In 29 studios throughout the country, volunteers record more than 3,000 new titles a year. If a needed book is not available, RFB offers to record it.

Among the Pathfinder titles available are *By Any Means Necessary*, by Malcolm X; *Cosmetics, Fashion, and the Exploitation of Women*, by Joseph Hansen and Evelyn

Reed; *Fidel Castro: Nothing Can Stop the Course of History*, an interview by Jeffrey Elliot and Mervyn Dymally; *Nicaragua: The Sandinista People's Revolution — Speeches by Sandinista Leaders; Revolution Betrayed*, by Leon Trotsky; *Socialism on Trial*, by James P. Cannon; and *Nelson Mandela: The Struggle is My Life*, by Nelson Mandela.

The RFB catalog is available for \$14 prepaid. It contains a table of contents and author and title indexes for all books and is shipped with a cassette containing information about RFB's service and instructions for use of the catalog. The \$14 includes the price of supplements to be issued regularly until the next catalog is published.

To obtain a borrower's application and for further information, contact RFB, 20 Roszel Rd., Princeton, N.J. 08540. Telephone (609) 452-0606.

PATHFINDER catalog available

Pathfinder carries a broad range of books on revolutionary and socialist history and theory. It publishes a wide selection of titles on the Black, women's, labor, Latin American, and international struggles. The 1988-89 catalog is available upon request from your local Pathfinder bookstore or write: Pathfinder, 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014.

SWP candidate blasts cop violence in Los Angeles

This year the Socialist Workers Party will be running candidates for municipal office in nearly 30 cities. SWP mayoral and/or city council campaigns have already been announced in Chicago; Los Angeles; St. Louis; Des Moines; Iowa; Omaha, Nebraska; Miami; and St. Paul, Minnesota. In addition,

[Los Angeles Police Department] rules';

"Brutality during Immigration and Naturalization Service raids in workplaces, including a case where one immigrant worker was forced to put his face in dog excrement and another who was thrown from a loading dock.

ballot. Petitioning teams went door to door in working-class neighborhoods, to shopping centers, and to political events, including a rally in support of abortion rights and a "counter-inaugural" ball protesting George Bush's policies.

On January 27, the Los Angeles Board of Registrars notified the SWP campaign headquarters that Britton has been certified for the ballot. The election is in April.

During January, television viewers in the Portland, Oregon, area had a chance to see a one-hour news conference and interview with Kathleen Mickells, Socialist Workers Party candidate for vice-president during the 1988 elections. The program was taped during Mickells' campaign tour through the area last fall by a campaign supporter who works at the big Boeing plant there. He then convinced Portland Cable Access, which is subscribed to by 155,000 homes in a three-county area around Portland, to air the show. It was shown six times during the month on prime time.

In addition to explaining the proposals made by the SWP in the Action Program to Confront the Coming Economic Crisis, Mickells fielded questions on a range of issues facing working people, including drugs, the environment,



Joel Britton
Militant/Holbrook Mahn

and the \$1.3 trillion debt owed by countries in Latin America, Asia, and Africa to U.S. and other imperialist banks and financial institutions.

Tom Leonard, SWP candidate for mayor of St. Louis, has spoken

to students at two high schools since his campaign was announced in early January. The longtime unionist and SWP leader was invited by student political clubs at Parkway North, a public high school, and John Burroughs, a private school. "I started my talks by explaining I was a communist, and then described the world situation," Leonard said in a telephone interview. "And I put a lot of stress on the Cuban revolution, encouraging the students to read more about Cuba. Both meetings were very serious. No one questioned that there is something wrong with the economy. The students asked about all kinds of things, including what's happening in the Soviet Union."

Supporters of Leonard and SWP alderman candidate Jim Garrison have issued a new campaign brochure. It features pictures and biographies of the candidates, a coupon and subscription blank for the *Militant*, and a program explaining the central proposals of the Action Program: shortening the workweek, affirmative action, and cancellation of the Third World debt.

Janet Post from Portland, and Elizabeth Stone and Pearl Chertov from Los Angeles, contributed to this column.

CAMPAIGNING FOR SOCIALISM

tion, the party will field a candidate for governor of New Jersey.

This week we are beginning a "Campaigning for Socialism" column that will appear from time to time during the election period.

"Police brutality is on the rise," said Joel Britton, SWP candidate for mayor of Los Angeles, in a press statement released February 2. "Among the numerous cases coming to light in Los Angeles are:

"Kerman Maddox, a local member of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People who was thrown against a fence in front of his home, verbally abused, and roughed up for allegedly running a red light;

"Police terrorizing families in Dalton Street apartments for over two hours, smashing windows, destroying furniture and other property, and spraypainting 'LAPD

"Such brutality," Britton noted, "goes hand in hand with the deepening economic and social crisis hitting working people in this city. And Black and Latino communities are hardest hit. In South Central Los Angeles, for example, Black youth unemployment is 45 percent."

Britton called for broad support by working people for those putting a spotlight on police brutality and for the prosecution of cops who commit such atrocities. He also urged a discussion on "how we can unite to confront the deepening economic crisis and the central problem of unemployment."

Supporters of Britton, an oil worker at Chevron's El Segundo refinery, were busy for nine days during mid-January gathering more than twice the 500 signatures required to place his name on the

Worldwide effort demands release of Mexico activist

BY SELVA NEBBIA

Amnesty International in London has agreed to take on the case of Mexican political activist José Ramón García Gómez, reported Edgar Sánchez in a telephone interview. Sánchez is a leader of the Revolutionary Workers Party (PRT) of Mexico.

García was kidnapped from his hometown, Cuautla, near Mexico City, on December 16 and has not been heard from since.

At the time of his kidnapping, García had been active in the Cardenista Democratic Front, a committee formed to protest and investigate electoral fraud. The front is named after Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas, who ran for president on the National Democratic Front ticket in last year's election. He placed second to Carlos Salinas de Gortari of the Institutional Revolutionary Party, who was elected president in a widely disputed race.

García had run in the July elections as the Revolutionary Workers Party candidate for mayor of Cuautla.

A broad international campaign is being organized to demand that the Mexican government release García. In response, 16 delegations of human rights activists, trade unionists, and others visited the Mexican embassy in Paris demanding García's release, Sánchez reported.

Delegations have also visited the Mexican embassy in Vienna, Austria. Protest messages have been sent to the Mexican embassies in Spain, France, West Germany, and Belgium.

Sánchez pointed out that Cuautla is located in the state of Morelos, which has been the scene of increased governmental repression. On January 23, for example, four people were killed and 15 wounded in a clash between progovernment and opposition groups during a municipal election in Xoxocotla.

The government, however, was forced to recognize the victory of the opposition and dissolved the rural police force, which was responsible for the killings, explained Sánchez.

Since García's disappearance, several demonstrations have been held in Mexico demanding his release. The latest one began January 15 when 200 people marched from Cuautla to Mexico City.

The march lasted three days and included many peasants from Morelos, an agricultural state. The march from Cuautla was led by Sánchez; Alberto Tapia, president of the Cardenista Democratic Front; and Ana Santander de García, García's wife.

"New contingents of people joined the march as we came into the towns between Cuautla and Mexico City, demonstrating

the growing solidarity being won around Ramón's release," Sánchez said.

Some 5,000 awaited the demonstration on the outskirts of Mexico City and marched to the Ministry of the Interior in the center of town. Among those who greeted the march was Rosario Ibarra de Piedra, former presidential candidate of the PRT and a prominent human rights leader.

"As a result of the demonstration," Sánchez explained, "the federal government formed a broad commission to investigate the case of García."

The new commission includes Fernando Gutiérrez Barrios, secretary of the interior; Carrillo Olea, director of national security; the head of a new government agency for human rights; and Morelos authorities, including the governor of the state, police chief, and the attorney general. The commission also includes two members of García's family and two representatives of the PRT.

"The government formed this commission as a result of the national and international pressure that has been generated on behalf of Ramón," Sánchez pointed out. "This led the government to make a political decision. In general it is the police that investigates cases such as this one."

A national forum has been scheduled for the end of February in Cuautla to demand García's release.

Telegrams and messages demanding García's immediate release should be sent to the Embassy of Mexico, 2829 16th St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20009.

Protests can also be sent to President Carlos Salinas de Gortari, Palacio Nacional, México, D.F., Mexico.

Copies of messages and telegrams should be sent to the National Front Against Repression, Medellín 366, Col. Roma Sur, 06760 México, D.F., Mexico.

Abortion rights activist in Detroit charged with assaulting cop

BY LEA SHERMAN

DETROIT — Abortion rights activist Susan Farquhar was charged with assault and battery of Sgt. Donald Vandersloot of the Livonia police at a pretrial hearing January 19. Livonia is a Detroit suburb.

The charges stem from Farquhar's participation in helping staff and patients enter the Women's Advisory Center abortion clinic in Livonia November 12. The clinic entrance was being blocked by 100 anti-abortion "Operation Rescue" demonstrators at the time.

Vandersloot, who was wearing civilian clothes, says that Farquhar ran out of the crowd. When he showed her his badge, the cop said, she hit him on the chest and arm.

Farquhar never touched the undercover cop, nor did he ever show a badge, she says. "He asked me, 'Why don't you leave these people alone?'" Farquhar explains. "I responded, 'Why aren't the police doing their job?' He raised his hand as if to backhand me. Then he said, 'Get her out of here.' I was thrown up on the front of the police car, handcuffed tightly, and taken to the Livonia jail." She spent from 8:50 a.m. to early afternoon in jail.

Jury selection in Farquhar's trial will begin March 27. The maximum penalty for misdemeanor assault and battery is 90 days in jail and a \$500 fine.

Fifty-seven antiabortion demonstrators were also arrested November 12 and charged with disorderly conduct.

On January 21 Farquhar helped defend another abortion clinic that 200 antiabortion disrupters tried unsuccessfully to close down. The following day she and 100 other abortion rights supporters took part in a Detroit rally commemorating the 1973 Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion. An abortion rights rally in the state capital of Lansing that weekend drew 250.

Canadian court decision upholds union rights

BY MONICA JONES

TORONTO — Unions in Canada won a major victory January 30 when the Ontario Court of Appeals ruled that union dues and their use are private, internal matters.

This ruling overturned a lower court decision in 1987 stating that the use of union dues for political purposes violates the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. James Clancy, president of the Ontario Public Service Employees Union (OPSEU), which had appealed the 1987 ruling, hailed its reversal.

The new ruling, Clancy explained, affirms the right of unions to decide democratically to do whatever they want with their money. It establishes that trade unionists have the right "to spend their resources on issues larger than those found at the bargaining table. If my members conclude we want to play a major role in taking on big business, we're free to do so," he stated.

This case began in 1985 when Mervin Lavigne challenged in court the right of unions to use money for anything but collective bargaining. Lavigne teaches at a community college organized by OPSEU.

In Canada, all workers covered by a contract must pay union dues, which are deducted from paychecks, though they need not become members of the union. Lavigne has chosen not to join the union.

He claimed that union financial support to the New Democratic Party, as well as to campaigns for various political and social issues, violates the Charter.

Among the issues Lavigne has focused

on is union support to activities for a woman's right to safe and legal abortions and for the Palestinian people's struggle.

Lavigne's case was funded to the tune of \$400,000 by the National Citizen's Coalition (NCC). The NCC also ran full-page ads in newspapers across the country in support of Lavigne's case.

The NCC is a right-wing organization financed in large part by big business. The group states it has "been proud to support Merv Lavigne's constitutional court challenge. We think no one should be able to force you to give your hard-earned money to unions for them to dole out as they please to groups you oppose. Groups like the NDP, extremist British mineworkers, Nicaraguans, and anti-defense activists."

The NCC plans to appeal to the Supreme Court of Canada.

Monica Jones is a member of United Steelworkers of America Local 32U, on strike against Bilt-rite Upholstery since Jan. 4, 1989.

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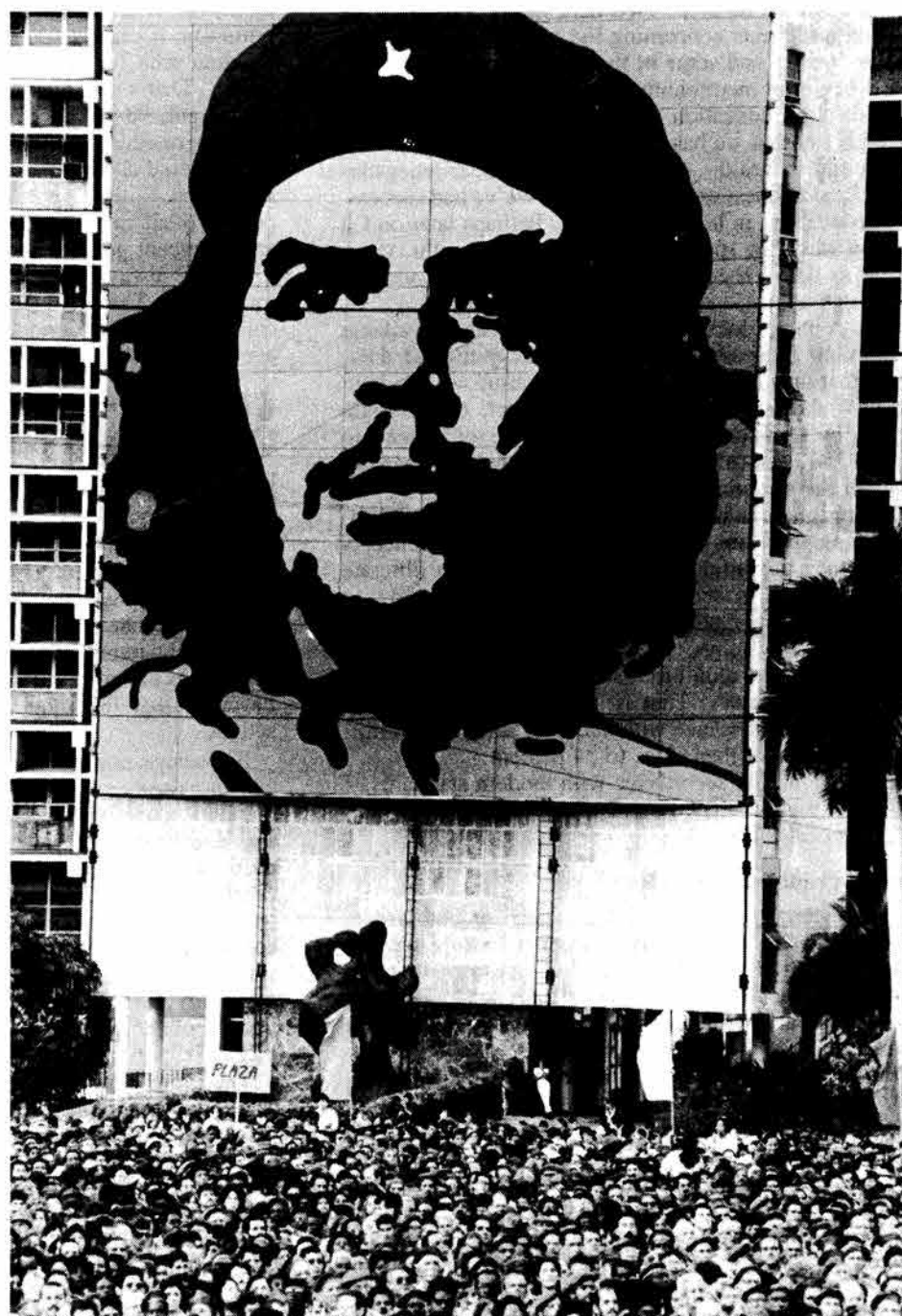
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International Socialist Review

Supplement to the Militant February 1989

Fidel Castro: 'If you don't trust people, it's better to abandon all claims to being socialist'



Impact Visuals/Mel Rosenthal

Cubans at Plaza of the Revolution in Havana hear Fidel Castro speak on Dec. 5, 1988, anniversary of founding of Revolutionary Armed Forces. In January 4 speech he returned to themes raised there.

Introduction

This month's *International Socialist Review* features the main speech Cuban President Fidel Castro delivered as part of the celebration of the Cuban revolution's 30th anniversary. The presentation, given on January 4, was one of three speeches he made on the revolution's anniversary.

The Cuban leader also spoke on January 1 in Santiago de Cuba exactly 30 years after the Rebel Army led by the July 26 Movement entered that city. On that date Cuban dictator Fulgencio Batista fled the country.

After a week's march across the length of the island, the rebel army entered Havana on Jan. 8, 1959. On the anniversary of that occasion Castro spoke to thousands of youth at the same spot where he greeted Havana's population 30 years before. At that time the site was the parade grounds of the Columbia military camp. Today it is a school.

The themes in the three speeches — defending communism, the prospects for international revolution, and the stakes of the struggle in southern Africa — are ones he has been explaining and returning to in a number of presentations and discussions since his speech on July 26 last year. (That speech appeared in the September 2 *Militant* and has been published by Pathfinder in the pamphlet, *Cuba Will Never Adopt Capitalist Methods.*)

These themes were also raised in a news conference in Ecuador in August and in discussions with representatives of left-wing parties during his trip to Mexico from November 30 to December 4.

A particularly succinct presentation of the Cuban leadership's views on these and other matters was made in a speech on December 5. (See January 13 *Militant* for full text.)

The January 1 speech in Santiago details the taking of power by the revolutionary forces 30 years ago. Castro explained that as the Batista regime was crumbling,

Washington attempted to organize a coup. The July 26 Movement, however, countered this maneuver by appealing to the people to call a revolutionary general strike.

"That strike played an extremely important role," Castro said. "It was a tremendous blow. It completely demoralized the enemy forces, avoided bloodshed, and saved lives. The workers of radio and television networks linked up with Radio Rebelde and at a given time Radio Rebelde was broadcasting for the entire country over radio and television through all the stations. The people were mobilized everywhere and in the capital itself."

"We had two armies," he added, "the Rebel Army and the army of the people."

Castro noted that although the revolutionary leadership didn't speak about socialism at the beginning, "the revolution didn't delay much in talking about socialism, because we said this is a genuine revolution and there can be no genuine revolution in our country if it isn't socialist."

In his January 8 speech, Castro appealed to the younger generation to carry on the responsibilities — internationally and at home — to continue the work begun 30 years ago of advancing the struggle for socialism. This includes, he said, steeling themselves against the capitalists' ideological offensive that communism is in "crisis" and capitalism has proved to be superior.

Castro noted that some people are saying that the heroic stage of the Cuban revolution is over, but that "is a mistaken opinion." Whether it's on the battlefield in Angola or carrying out volunteer labor at home, Cuba needs and has heroes, he said. "I claim," he said, "that Cuba is a country filled with men and women of heroic capacities."

Moreover, a new international situation is opening up he explained. "This is a decisive moment in the history of Latin America and the Caribbean. We perceive a great ebullience, a great rebellion in those countries against imperialist domination, never before witnessed. These are truly new times."

Below is the entire text of Castro's January 4 speech. The translation is taken from the January 22 issue of *Granma Weekly Review*. The footnotes and subheads are by the *Militant*.

Fidel Castro

I don't know how the acoustics sound here. It's not such a big gathering, but there are many people seated and the place extends way back. I don't know whether those over there at the end can hear well. I think they said they can, right? [Laughter]

It'll take a bit of patience on the part of those attending this ceremony who are behind the press, which constitutes a sort of wall over there. There must be a few dozen or hundreds who can't see the rostrum, but I hope they'll remain there quietly and not talk too much among themselves.

I wish, in the first place, to thank the hundreds and hundreds of foreign visitors — although perhaps foreign visitors is not the right term and it would be better to call them brothers and sisters from other countries [Applause] — who have come to our country to join us in commemorating this historical date and this happy birthday that is the 30th anniversary of the revolution.

When I say "happy" I don't mean that everything is done and all is well. It means we're happy to arrive at the 30th anniversary of the revolution, and we're infinitely grateful for your presence here, given that the revolution was not just the result of our work but also, to a large extent, the result of international support and cooperation. For if this pygmy that is the island of Cuba successfully faced up to the imperialist giant, it has to be said that that wouldn't have been possible without the support of the socialist countries and the progressive and democratic forces of the entire world.

I'm not going to make here a long and never ending re-

Continued on next page

Continued from previous page

counting of the revolution's deeds, works, and successes; I'd do better to ask you to forgive us if at a rally like this those of us speaking here praise our own work too much. But that's what happens at every birthday party: no child or teenager on their birthday is criticized for any defect. Instead their virtues are emphasized. Perhaps a few things ought to be mentioned here in general terms for our foreign guests concerning the colossal efforts made by our country and some of the results achieved.

I'll begin by mentioning what our enemies first mention, namely, education and public health, because our enemies say that we have had colossal successes in education and in health — although some super-renegeades have dared to question whether or not we've had successes in education, in health, in sports. Perhaps later on I'll explain why they speak about these things, and it is precisely to deny other things. That which is too visible, they can't deny.

Our country doesn't have many statistics available concerning the past. It hasn't been easy to find data, given that they were nonexistent. A census was made in 1953 — the year in which, to be exact, our struggle began; by then the military dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista had been ruling the country for almost a year. So some of the statistics come from that census.

For instance, it was said that 24 percent of the country's population was illiterate, according to the concepts of illiteracy prevailing at the time, because an illiterate was considered to be anyone who didn't know how to sign his name, or add, or write anything, not even a paragraph. Nowadays, according to modern concepts, many people who didn't fit that definition of illiteracy are considered illiterates. That is, under more benign estimates and in accordance with narrower standards of illiteracy, there were then close to 24 percent.

I believe that in accordance with modern standards of illiteracy, we could say that our country then had some 60 or 70 percent illiterates.

Second-grade education level

The average educational level was second grade. Nowhere in the world today is a person with a second-grade education considered anything but an illiterate. That is, many finished second or third grade knowing how to read and write and hardly knew how to sign their names.

Primary school attendance, according to that 1953 census, was between 45 and 46 percent, I think, and secondary school attendance came to only around 8 percent. Technological education was practically nonexistent. There were six or seven trade schools, as they were then called.

There were between 10,000 and 15,000 university students, and later, during the period of the Batista dictatorship, practically all the universities were closed down. There was the main university, and another university for the eastern provinces was beginning to be developed, plus some attempts in Camagüey and Holguín. Needless to say, nothing like special schools was known in our country, schools for children with problems, with difficulties, and when it came to day-care centers, nothing like it was known in Cuba.

The immense majority of the women didn't have jobs either, and the jobs they did have were generally very depressing.

In health matters, indices are given. It's estimated — a conservative estimate — that there was a mortality rate of 60 per 1,000 live births in the first year of life. There were no statistics on that; we know it because of what we had when the statistics began — 60, 50, or thereabouts. But no one really knew what the real figure was. We say that there were more than 60 per 1,000 live births.

The number of mothers who died during delivery exceeded 12 per 10,000.

There were 6,000 doctors in our country. It wasn't a small number, yet they were nearly all concentrated in the capital and many lacked work. We figure that life expectancy was less than 60. Claiming it was around 60 would be saying too much. There were practically no public health services. A large portion of the population had no access to public health services, and we can say that in the countryside, where over half of the population lived, there weren't any public health services.

More than 30 percent of the work force was unemployed or underemployed. Social security barely covered 50 percent of the population — and what coverage! In many cases the pensions were insignificant; when the revolution triumphed, there were no retirement funds available. The money had been embezzled.

That was, broadly speaking, the situation that prevailed in our country.

There are some changes that can be mathematically measured, and the international agencies are familiar with the validity of our statistics.

Illiteracy reduced to zero

Today, illiteracy has technically — I say technically — been cut to 1.5 percent, that is, it involves people who because of old age or because of some other problems couldn't be taught to read and write in any way, and so

we can say that illiteracy has been reduced to zero.

Today the opportunity to study extends to 100 percent of all the country's children — nationwide, both in the cities and the countryside.

The opportunity to complete a secondary education extends to 100 percent of all the pupils who have completed primary education. This doesn't mean that 100 percent of all the children and teenagers avail themselves of this opportunity; it's never 100 percent. There are always some children who for physical or other reasons don't go to school. That's why we can't say 100 percent. It's instead 99 percent, 98 percent in primary education.

In intermediate level education — which, as I was saying, covered about 8 percent of young people before the revolution — the opportunity nowadays extends to 100 percent of all boys and girls of those ages. Actually, close to 87 percent go to school in the 12 to 16 age bracket. There are always some cases of teenage marriages, unfortunately. These are things that can't be avoided: socialism hasn't yet found the formula for preventing teenage marriages. It tries to promote sexual education, it

“Our capital's infant mortality rate is well below Washington's, the capital of the empire . . .”

teaches, educates the young — but there are some factors of a social nature that make it impossible for 100 percent of the kids in the 12 to 16 age bracket to go to school, but never because they don't have the opportunity to go to school.

Nowadays practically every one of the country's 14 provinces has its own university facilities. In the field of medicine alone, there are 21 medical schools in our country. Every province has a medical school — some have even two, and the capital has six. Now every one of the country's 14 provinces, under the new politico-administrative division, trains its own doctors and trains its own specialists. And there are close to 28,000 students enrolled in the medical schools, which include dentistry and university nursing degrees — I'm talking about education, about university facilities, not about medical services.

There are hundreds of technical schools turning out skilled workers in the country. There are around 100,000 regular university students and more than 200,000 if we consider those who study by alternate means such as workers' guided studies, nurses getting their degrees, elementary schoolteachers getting their elementary education degrees, etc., making up a total of 200,000 university students although many of these are already working. In other words, they will not be future university graduates looking for jobs, but instead they are studying something related to the jobs they already have.

More than 1,000 day-care centers

There are more than 1,000 day-care centers in the country, with more than 100,000 children in them, and an ambitious program is being carried out. Suffice it to say that in 1987 City of Havana Province built 54 day-care centers with an enrollment capacity of 210 children each. And in the year 1988 that just ended, plus a few days into January, City of Havana finished some 56 more day-care centers: 110 centers in two years. The capital's demand came to 19,500, and there is capacity for roughly 24,000 now.

Naturally, it's a bit difficult to pinpoint the exact demand because, since there weren't enough available a few years ago, perhaps some people who needed day-care centers hadn't applied for them.

The country now has available more than 40,000 special education openings, and during the next three or four years an additional 40,000 will be created, which will meet our total special education needs. This is meant for children with hearing or visual problems, or learning deficiencies, or there may be even cases of mental retardation and also behavioral problems. In short, for a number of reasons, the need is imposed on society for that kind of special school, which we have already met to a large extent. There's a program begun by City of Havana Province.

Havana, with its 2 million inhabitants, will in 1989 meet all its special education needs. And we figure that it may take the rest of the provinces, which are also carrying out their programs, three or four years at the most.

These are truly extraordinary leaps that our country has made in this field. We have a large number of different types of schools ranging from exact sciences schools to senior high schools in the countryside, technological schools of various kinds, vocational art schools, sports schools. In short, they would be too long to list here, but as I said I merely wanted to speak about this in broad terms.

In the field of health I can say, for instance, that the infant mortality rate, which in 1987 had been lowered to 13.3 per 1,000 live births in the first year of life, this year, when we hoped to bring it below 13, we managed

to take it to less than 12, so that our infant mortality rate for 1988 came to 11.9. This places us — and this rate has been sustained — among the 20 countries with the lowest infant mortality rates in the world, and even below the rates of many industrially developed countries. I think this has truly been an extraordinary accomplishment.

An inland province like Cienfuegos has already dropped to below 10. Last year we were wondering which would be the first province to go below 10 — it was Cienfuegos, an inland province, that reached a rate of 8.9 per 1,000 live births in 1988.

Another inland province, Pinar del Río, known before the revolution as “Cinderella” because of all the calamities they had there, reached a rate of 10. The Isle of Youth trailed with 10.4, and then came the capital of the republic with 10.6, which, naturally, makes our capital's infant mortality rate well below that of Washington, the capital of the empire.

Our infant mortality rates are now similar to those of the United States, the world's richest country, which is not among the first in low infant mortality rates, of course, although it goes without saying that indeed the affluent, the whites, etc., may be below 10. But the Black population, those of Latin origin, Chicanos, all of them, may be as high as 15, 17, 20, or 20 odd. It's not equal, over there it's not even. Whenever we talk about the infant mortality rate or education in Cuba, we mean all the people in the country, across the board.

There are some provinces that are a bit more advanced, others a bit less, in this question of mortality rates. But they are all progressing in more or less the same way. The highest one is close to 14 but is being lowered — if it isn't 14, it's 15 and is coming down — because I think that it was the province of Las Tunas that last year registered 18 and this year it's around 15. It's advancing. All the provinces are advancing.

The maternal mortality rate in 1988 was 2.6 per 10,000 deliveries — also one of the world's lowest. This gives you an idea of the security women, mothers, and families have, even though the number of deliveries has gone up.

Cuba's tuberculosis rate below U.S.

One interesting statistic concerns tuberculosis. The 1988 rate was 5.9 per 100,000 people, which places Cuba below Canada and the United States. This is saying a lot — Cuba's tuberculosis rate is below those of Canada and the United States.

Plenty could be said about all this, but it would take too long — what is being done, for instance, with German measles, measles, tetanus, and other diseases, which have practically disappeared. So our society is getting rid of a series of diseases, which can only be done through a truly sound medical network.

A novel institution, that of the family doctor, was introduced here. We already have more than 6,000 doctors engaged in this type of practice, and in a few years we'll have 20,000 family doctors. The doctors are now starting to be placed in factories, schools, day-care centers, so we'll have a truly extraordinary medical network.

I think that this year, 1989, we will be graduating 3,600 doctors and by 1990 close to 4,000. More doctors

“Because of the blockade, not even medicine, not even aspirin, can be brought to Cuba from the United States . . .”

graduate in our country every year than all the doctors imperialism left us with, because out of the 6,000 we then had they took away 3,000 and left us with 3,000. Today we have more than 31,000, and when the new class graduates in 1989, we will have around 35,000 doctors who have been trained well, not just in theory but also in practice, taking part constantly in the country's medical services. Medical services cover the whole country, both urban and rural areas, which is precisely what explains the results I pointed out.

We're developing new fields in medicine. Our country is now doing heart transplants and for a long time has been doing kidney transplants. We are beginning to do nerve transplants. We now have a center engaged in developing that activity with rather good prospects. We're also doing ocular microsurgery and are advancing considerably in a series of fields that are part of what we might call sophisticated medicine.

In the social sphere, there's practically no unemployment in our country. Statistically speaking, we do have some unemployed people, which is not because of a lack of jobs, because we still have a shortage of labor power in many places — in agriculture, in the mountains, in reforestation, in construction. Rather it has to do with the preference of some young people for certain kinds of work. But that doesn't mean that there are no jobs available for every young man or woman, independent of the



Schoolchildren on their way home in Havana. "Our country had some 60 or 70 percent illiterates" before the revolution, Castro said. Today, "the opportunity to study extends to 100 percent of the country's children — both in the cities and countryside."

Impact Visuals/Judy Janda

fact that it can't always be the type of job that perhaps they like best.

Social security covers all the workers in the country, 100 percent, and, of course, one of the most sacred obligations of the state is that relating to pensions, retirement, and all the other social security benefits extended to families in need of them.

Naturally, the imperialists and reactionaries plus their allies the world over try to ignore all the other advances of the revolution. For instance, the revolution has considerably advanced in the scientific field: we now have more than 100 scientific institutions, and there were practically none when the revolution triumphed. Imperialism tries to deny our advances in the country's economic development — agriculture, industry, construction.

Imperialist blockade

How could the social accomplishments achieved by our country have come about without economic development? And this in spite of the fact that we must develop under very difficult conditions, because for the past 30 years we have had to contend with the imperialist blockade on our country. What other countries are subject to a blockade? Very few. With a zealous hatred, the empire forbids that even medical equipment be exported to Cuba, not even medicines. Not even an aspirin can be brought to Cuba from the United States. It's a merciless blockade to which very few socialist countries are subject. I believe it's only the People's Republic of Korea, Vietnam, and Cuba. And with Cuba it's a fierce blockade, for the imperialists exert pressure on their allies everywhere not to trade with Cuba, not to grant credits to Cuba, not to transfer technology to Cuba.

Nevertheless, our country's economy has grown during these 30 years at a rate higher than 4 percent a year under the conditions of the blockade. I can give you, for instance, some figures.

To give you one example, our electric generating capacity has grown more than eightfold during these 30 years, eightfold! Steel production, which was very low in our country, has grown more than sixteenfold. Cement production has grown fivefold; we used to produce 700,000 tons whereas today we produce more than 3.5 million tons. Our production capacity is even greater, but in certain years the industry didn't get the right kind of maintenance. We're now trying to increase cement pro-

duction until we arrive at not less than 4.6 million tons, in line with our economic and social development plans.

Production of fertilizers has grown fivefold. Citrus fruit production has grown seventeenfold. Egg production has grown eightfold, and so on with many other products. Nickel production has doubled and keeps growing. The machine industry is young in our country and is now developing with strength. More than 6,000 cane harvesters have been manufactured, just to give one example of machine industry production output. To a greater or lesser extent, all our agricultural and industrial production has increased. Our textile industry is another example. Growth has been sustained in all the branches of our economy, in some more and in others less.

The fishing industry, an important source of food, has grown tenfold over these years of the revolution. And it would have grown much more if it hadn't been for an international measure that we supported because it was just, although it didn't benefit us, I mean the 200-mile economic zone.¹ If it hadn't been for that measure which we, as a Third World country, supported, we would have increased our fishing production 25 or 30 times over, because we already had a relatively big fishing fleet and the trained personnel for ocean fishing.

Imperialists say socialism is a failure

These are all real, serious efforts that the country has been making in many fields of the economy and not just in the fields of education, health, and sports. But the empire tries to deny everything. It's in its interest to say that the revolution is not prospering, isn't getting anywhere. That's a sort of myth that many people took for granted and so there are many people who speak well of Cuba and say: "They've had great successes in health and in education." The imperialists do not mention the other successes of the revolution, in order to promote the idea that socialism is a failure.

What did our country have to tackle the development plans? Our country tackled the development plans with personnel who had hardly finished sixth grade. Nearly all

1. Castro refers to a demand by several Latin American countries that the international coastal fishing-rights limit be extended from 12 to 200 miles. This was unfavorable for Cuba, which has developed a large oceangoing fishing fleet, but Cuba joined the fight for this demand to protect the interests of the Latin American countries against the imperialist countries.

our managers, and a large portion of our engineers, university professors, and technicians went off with their imperialist masters, with the bourgeoisie, with the landowners. We had few agronomists, few veterinarians, and even less stayed, since a large portion left the country. Our country had to start from zero in facing those problems. Sugar mills were often managed by workers who had hardly finished sixth grade, and this was how we had to perform during the early years of the revolution.

The revolution lacked experience; it was, so to speak, the first socialist process launched by a Third World country. There wasn't any experience available on how to construct socialism in a Third World country.

Vietnam, a Third World country, had been liberated before we were, but not the whole country, just a part of it, and had to concentrate mainly on the liberation struggle. It was our lot to have the experience of building socialism 90 miles from the United States — actually a bit closer, given that we have a U.S. base in Guantánamo, in the eastern region, and no distance separates the U.S. base from our territory — and against the fierce U.S. blockade.

We made mistakes — yes, we have made many mistakes, and it was to a certain extent logical that mistakes were made. We made two types of mistakes: during one phase we made mistakes of idealism and in another phase, while trying to correct our mistakes of idealism, we made mistakes of economism and reliance on market methods. I often use a stronger word to brand them as errors of market economy madness.

Now we are correcting those errors, and the rectification was very necessary, without falling into previous errors of idealism. We are moving slowly, but results have started to become evident everywhere. This isn't easy. Nobody should think that it will be easy, since it deals with the theory of the methods and forms of socialist construction in a given country. All countries are different. No two are exactly alike. I would say that no two revolutionary processes can be exactly alike.

Agrarian reform

Our revolution was creative. There was no lack of creative spirit. There had been other revolutions before the Cuban revolution and, for example, the way in which we carried out our agrarian reform was truly creative. The historical precedent was that all countries that started to build socialism divided up the land into small parcels among millions of people and then collectivized little by little, more or less rapidly or abruptly, sometimes using more political methods, and at other times more coercive methods. That never happened in our country. We didn't divide the land at the beginning; the big capitalist enterprises and the big landholdings remained big blocks and became state agricultural enterprises.

All the sharecroppers, tenant farmers, or others who had plots of land were freed from having to pay rent in money or kind. They were made landowners and became small independent farmers. Throughout the years — after we had given a big push to state enterprises in agriculture, which were on the same footing as industry — we slowly but surely, using political and economic methods, encouraged them to join the cooperatives.

This process of organizing cooperatives has advanced, although 8 percent of the land is still in the hands of tens of thousands of independent owners.

We didn't have to invent the independent landowner; we didn't have to discover him because we know him and he has been present since the victory of the revolution. He still exists and will remain as long as he wants because we won't oblige anybody to join cooperatives by force. We will avoid this, and nobody has ever been forced to join a cooperative.

But the cooperative movement continues to advance, so that now 80 percent of the land is in state enterprises, 12 percent in cooperatives, and 8 percent owned by independent farmers. We help and cooperate with them, we urge them to produce and provide technical support, credits, etc. We write off all loans if there is a disaster, hurricane, blight, or something of that sort. But the bulk of the country's agricultural production in key sectors such as sugar, cattle, citrus, rice, meat, milk, and eggs is the result of the work, first of all, of state farms and secondly cooperatives.

State farms and cooperatives provide the great bulk of the country's agricultural products, among them sugar, our chief crop. The 8 percent made up of small farmers helps, but it does not play a fundamental role in the development of Cuban agriculture. Of course, this agriculture is ever better because at first there was the same problem of lack of agronomists, economists, or veterinarians, and the initial farm administrators only had fifth- or sixth-grade educations.

Our agriculture exports food for 40 million people in other parts of the world, 40 million! It exports calories for 40 million people with sugar, citrus fruits, and other crops.

If we hadn't undertaken our own form of agrarian reform, it would have meant the end of sugar production as an agricultural industry. We would have fallen into having small plots and production for individual consumption.

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tion and would not have been able to meet the fundamental needs of the people.

Literacy campaign

I believe our revolution was creative, for example, when it undertook the campaign against illiteracy; in this it became a model. We were the first country to virtually eradicate illiteracy in a year, utilizing hundreds of thousands of people, basically students. That was the start and then came the follow-up drives.

I repeat that the revolution has been creative in a lot of things and, I would say that some of the things we have done were ours alone, not done by other countries, and we are really proud of several.

I think, for example, that the study and work system in education is unique. No other country in the world has it. Combining study and work is the application of the ideas of [Karl] Marx and [José] Martí.

But we didn't just limit ourselves to noting the ideas of Marx and Martí, two great thinkers, two great revolutionaries who proposed this idea. At a given stage we decided to implement it because we believed in it, because we were absolutely convinced that if education became universal, work would also have to become universal. Otherwise, future societies would be societies of intellectuals unable to work with their hands. And that may be

“When the minibrigades reorganized in the capital we built 54 day-care centers in one year . . .”

one of the most serious problems faced by the world of the future, especially those seeking a just social system and the construction of socialism.

It is terrible that people should shirk manual labor, and we decided to universalize the practice, first through the School Goes to the Countryside program and then through the schools in the countryside. Thus today virtually everyone under 40 has done productive work with their hands. This is a general standard, and I think the excellent qualities of our young people, the thousands of hours of voluntary work they do, the tasks they undertake here or in any part of the world have much to do with the system of education established by the Cuban revolution, the system of study and work. [Applause]

Now we have started to see the fruits of this system, everyday and everywhere. Nobody here is surprised when asked to work in construction or agriculture.

Biggest citrus fruit plantation in world

There are really impressive examples. The biggest citrus fruit plantation in the world is here, in Matanzas, about 45,000 hectares [1 hectare = 2.47 acres] of fruit trees, which will have 50,000 a few years from now, or maybe 60,000, on difficult and rocky terrain. It was a sparsely populated area, and the project has developed utilizing the schools in the countryside with the participation of students who do three hours of work daily. That doesn't hurt anybody; on the contrary, it makes them smarter and teaches them more about life. They learn to appreciate their studies. I only wish I had been educated in a school of this kind!

This year more than 400,000 tons of citrus, worth more than 100 million pesos, have been produced on the Matanzas plantation, with labor based on the schools in the countryside. The 60 schools in the area are the soul of the project.

I urge you to tour the world to see if there is any project like this one, with a production of 400,000 tons — of course, they were started several years ago and are the product of a concept that was starting to come into its own — based on study and work, the efforts of the students, who are proud of it. Production increases every year, and I am sure that one day they will produce a million tons of citrus because the project has become a scientific and educational complex. They are using technology — different irrigation systems, fertilization, plant treatment — and they are rapidly making gains. In the last two or three years the project has made a lot of progress.

But that isn't the only one. Those programs exist in nearly all the provinces. That's the largest, but there is also the one on the Isle of Youth. This is one of the basic features of our educational system. And I repeat that it is unique in the world.

Voluntary work

We also have voluntary work. In our country voluntary work has reached levels greater than anywhere else in the world. We can safely say so based on the facts. It is part of the culture of our people, the participation of the masses in the solution of problems, the contribution to society. It is part of the thinking and ideology of the revolution, and those levels haven't been reached anywhere else. It is done systematically here.

I think the idea of the minibrigades is another contribution of our revolution that helps to organize the work force while promoting mass participation in the social development of the country, because we must build many day-care centers, schools, polyclinics, and especially housing.

We can manufacture stone, sand, cement. We can do a lot in the manufacturing of materials. But we need people to build all those projects, and often there aren't enough for the economic and industrial projects. Public works construction requires people.

I won't give the guests here an explanation of how the idea of the minibrigades developed in 1970, how they were very promising but then declined because of the errors of economism and reliance on market methods I mentioned earlier, and because of certain mechanisms for economic development that were introduced. These proved really sinister. There is no other way to describe it. Now the minibrigades have been revived, in a much better way. They are much stronger. And they are the answer to our problems of social development. Not the only one, but one of the most important, especially in the capital of the republic.

Before the rebirth of the minibrigades we couldn't even consider the idea of building a day-care center in the capital because we didn't have the workers to build a single day-care center or polyclinic! When the minibrigades reorganized in the capital, we built 54 day-care centers in one year. Allow me to tell you that the five-year plan had stipulated five. Day-care construction had been totally neglected because we simply didn't have the workers and then 54 were built in a year.

In this year plus a few days of January — that is, last year, 1988, and the first days of January — there will be about 56. One hundred and ten in two years! At the rate we were going without minibrigades it would have taken us 100 years to build those day-care centers! The minibrigades were the overwhelming response to the social development needs of the population: the construction of housing, day-care centers, and schools.

This year, thanks to the work of the minibrigades, the capital will have all the polyclinics it needs. We had them, but some were based in adapted and inadequate buildings. Some of the new ones have been finished, and others are under construction, so 20 will be finished this year.

This year the minibrigades will finish the 24 additional special schools needed for this branch of education.

“How many workers do you have?”

I'm not sure if our guests know what the minibrigades are, but it's very simple. Factories or workplaces are asked, “How many workers do you have?” “1,000.” “Send 20, 30, 40, 50, or 100.” Because in all factories and work centers under both socialism and capitalism — for different reasons that it would be too long to explain here — there is excess personnel, be it because of narrow job profiles, paternalism, or an inflated payroll. We would tell them, “Send 50 and the rest can do the job.” Without working extra hours the others can do the job easily, with a little planning. Minibrigade members receive the same salary as in their work centers, but with a difference: they say there they work 44 hours weekly. I would like to know at what factory they really work 44 hours, making full use of the workday.

Minibrigade members work 60, 65, or 70 hours a week. Doing what? Building housing for the factory workers and other public works.

Not all the apartments were for the work center. The state makes a big contribution. The factory pays salaries, and the state repays the factories. The worker gets his factory pay, and the state provides the materials, land, blueprints, and equipment. Factories get 50 percent of the homes they build, and starting this year it will be 60 percent. [Applause] A percentage must always be at the

“If you don't trust people, it's better to abandon all claims of being a revolutionary and do something else . . .”

disposal of the state because there are people who can't be sent to the minibrigades: for example, teachers. It isn't easy and there are a lot of needs, so we need a reserve of housing.

But it's very attractive to have the factory send the workers, organize itself and cut costs while building housing for the workcenter or building other public works I mentioned. This is a very attractive formula. This movement has a lot of force.

Then there are the social minibrigades, which is something else: people build their own homes in areas that had not been suited for housing from the point of view of health or where there is poor housing. If a housewife joins the minibrigade, she is paid. If a young person who



Construction minibrigade in Havana, left, and a woman, thousands of homes, and Expo Cuba, a national expression of the revolutionary struggle to obtain power and in the co

neither studies nor works joins, he or she is paid. If there are workers who are not indispensable at their factories and can be released, they join. Those are the social minibrigades.

In the capital there are now more than 35,000 minibrigade members. Now the problem is not the work force but materials, and we are hard at work on this in the construction materials industry. But there is no lack of people. In fact, there is virtually a surplus thanks to these concepts in which the masses are given the opportunity for concrete and direct participation in the solution of their problems. If there is no available work force, then who will build the housing? The masses.

And it should be said that Expo Cuba was basically built by the minibrigades. [Applause]

What perhaps most impressed the visitors was that this was not built by professional construction workers. They were amazed to see how a project of this kind could be undertaken.

Without the revival of the minibrigades we couldn't even dream of something like this! Before, we would have to send the person who suggested a project like this to the psychiatric hospital immediately. We didn't have the workers to build a day-care center and this year the minibrigades have built more than 50, together with many other things, thousands of homes, and this giant [Expo Cuba]. They have helped to make all sorts of construction materials, the other things and this giant, for it has really been a gigantic effort, and the minibrigades have done it. That says a lot, and it explains the concept of mass participation.

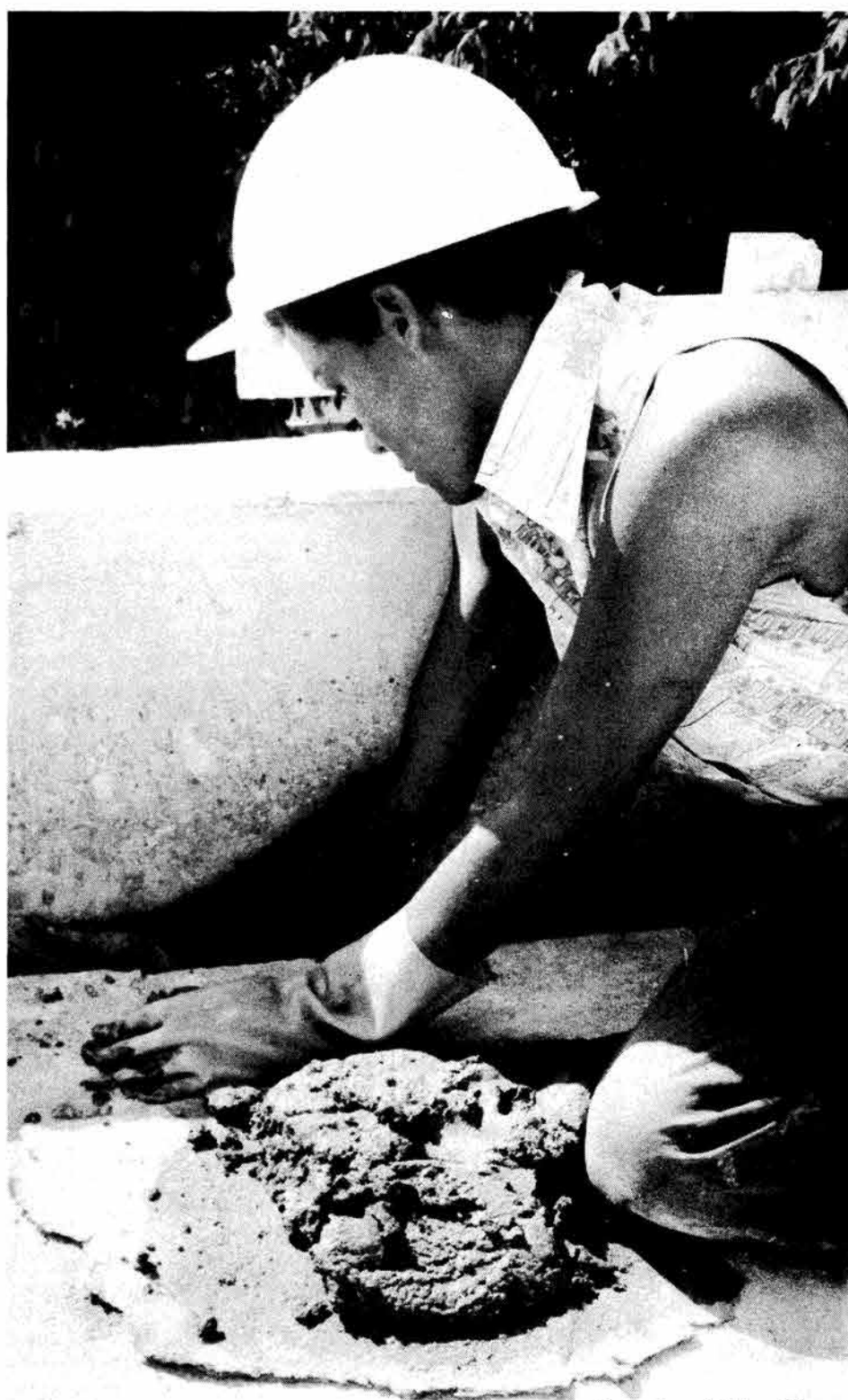
If there is joy over this project, if we will have something as extraordinarily useful as this national exhibition center, so useful in every sense, to evaluate the quality of products, to convey the views of the public to industry, to encourage all branches of the economy and services to display their work, it is because of the minibrigades, it is because a mass method to solve important problems emerged. I think that's one of the most notable things about this project.

Perhaps this will give visitors a better idea of what the minibrigades are. There is no need to give Cubans this explanation. They know all about it.



Impact Visuals/Marvin Collins

an member of a brigade, right. In 1988, Castro said, minibrigades built 54 day-care center. "If you trust in people, you can see the marvelous things they do, both in construction of socialism."



Federation of Cuban Women

Another concept typical of our revolution is the idea of contingents of construction workers, which is also unique. [Applause]

I asked you to excuse me for the positive things we would talk about during these birthday festivities, and I

“The family doctor as part of the Cuban concept of primary health care is unique in the world . . .”

know there are many good things in many parts of the world, in many revolutionary countries. But I feel there are no groups of construction workers like the contingents that have been organized in our country, based on certain principles and dedication to work. It didn't start in construction but rather at a scientific center.

The construction contingents have yielded fabulous results. The first contingent was created in 1987 as part of the process of rectification, and now there are 10,000 to 15,000 construction workers and the figure will increase.

The achievements of the first contingent, the Blas Poca Contingent, are really incredible. [Applause] The important thing is that the concept has been extended and there are now contingents in every province.

What is a construction contingent? Workers for whom certain concepts of organization and pay have been established. We use the socialist method of pay, according to the quantity and quality of work. There are no other mechanisms, such as those that created a big fuss in construction and terribly affected quality. We sought adequate principles regarding pay, but the first principle is that they do what they do not because of what they are paid; no man would do for money what these contingents do. Payment according to work shows the consideration on the part of society for their efforts, but they work according to certain principles.

There is no work schedule; the eight-hour day has been forgotten. It may be good in Britain, the Federal Republic of Germany, countries with high productivity, a lot of machinery, automated lathes and all that. Because one of the worst things passed on to us by the former colonial or neocolonial rulers were their habits of consumerism and aspirations of consumerism and their norms of work, when labor productivity in those countries is far superior and in Cuba after the revolution we often lacked workers because there were not enough for construction or because they didn't like that work.

That doesn't mean we have abolished the eight-hour day. God forbid that we should abolish the eight-hour day! They would say we were the most retrograde people on earth.

Virtually no absenteeism

We have invented something much better: collectives of workers who forget about hours. People here work every other Saturday. Before, people worked every Saturday until noon, and then it was changed to every other Saturday. But all of the contingents forget about the so-called nonworking Saturdays. [Applause] They ignore labor legislation in the sense that labor discipline is not imposed by a law, a judge, or an official of the Ministry of Labor, nor any administrator. In the contingents the collective handles discipline! They censure or punish among themselves because they don't tolerate laziness or absenteeism. They don't tolerate those who come to work late. It's amazing — there is virtually no absenteeism in the contingents, and the workers handle discipline. The contingents are based on dedication to work.

This doesn't mean it'll always be like that. This is a stage of struggle for a Third World country that wants to build socialism and develop. If we had a lot of people, we wouldn't have to do this. We could have three shifts. Contingents work one shift of at least 12 hours, but usually it's 14 or 15 hours.

We always make sure that they don't overdo it in their work. How interesting! Historically there has always been a struggle to have people work hard, and here we have to watch over the contingents and say, "Don't

overdo it, that's too much, finish at 10:00 and sleep so many hours." They are always inventing a pretext to work — that it rained on such and such a day and they couldn't work so things are behind schedule and they want to finish. We have to be watching them.

The workers in the contingent are the best fed in Cuba. Care for people, a key thing, is the principle. Workers on the contingent have a doctor, direct medical care. They have air conditioning in their rooms. There are no mosquitoes or heat. They have good dormitories, food, and clothing.

The secret is caring for people, which is vital in socialist construction. The capitalists, who are neither foolish nor slow, often invent methods of this sort, for they want to exploit people, get more surplus value out of them, so, often they provide a lot for workers.

Under socialism often the person was forgotten; since work was a duty, all was left to the duty of the worker. We stressed the importance of caring for people, of how important it is that people see they are getting the consideration they deserve, that they are given the trust they merit.

We have faith in those things; had this not been the case where would the revolution have gone? The revolution had to be made under very difficult conditions in the mountains, where what people can be and do was demonstrated.

If you don't trust people, it's better to abandon all claims to being revolutionary and do something else. If you don't trust people, it's better to abandon all claims to being socialists and invent something else, which need not be invented for it was invented long ago.

An extraordinary privilege

Capitalism doesn't have to worry about any of these problems. Capitalism was invented by history with spontaneous laws, while socialism must be the product of planned work. It is the first opportunity to plan development, and that is an extraordinary privilege.

If you trust in people, you can see the marvelous things they do, both in the revolutionary struggle to obtain

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Angolan students in their dormitory at Naval Engineering School in Havana. "We're the country with the highest number of foreign students per capita," said Castro.

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power and in the construction of socialism.

Of course, we didn't know the things we know now. We didn't see them with the clarity we do now. We weren't born revolutionaries, by any means; we have had to learn as we go, and every day we learn something new.

On the contingent a new \$100,000 bulldozer equals three of its kind elsewhere. The care and upkeep of equipment and how it's used is really impressive and promising. This is one of the most recent creations of the revolution.

I think the family doctor as part of the Cuban concept of primary health care is unique in the world. It was an idea that developed a few years ago. It was put into practice, tested, and then extended. Now there are family doctors in all the mountains of the eastern region, and 63 percent of the population in the capital is now covered by the family doctor program. This concept will be im-

"We organize defense with participation of all the people: workers, students, men, women — millions are actively involved . . ."

plemented in the day-care centers, schools, factories; it is one of the incredible results, one of the creations of the revolution, a new concept of the revolution.

We could talk about a lot of other things. I think our system of complex, broad-based mass organizations is unique, the way in which it has been done here.

I think our electoral system — and the institutions of the revolution are so often called into question — the way delegates are nominated in an electoral district, which are the bases for all state power, is unique, for the party does not nominate candidates to be delegates. There must be more than one candidate and not more than eight, and

they are nominated by the people without any participation by the party, which doesn't say this person or that, I nominate so-and-so.

It is the people who meet in their electoral district who nominate candidates as delegates for that district. That doesn't exist anywhere else.

We don't have to feel ashamed in the face of slander against our revolution, if we have an electoral system that no other country has. It was established because the revolution emerged and developed with close ties to the masses.

If the people were counterrevolutionary, if most of the people were counterrevolutionary, all they need do would be to nominate counterrevolutionaries and most of the delegates would be counterrevolutionaries opposed to the revolution and socialism. Every five years we have two grass-roots elections and delegates can be recalled by the voters.

The electoral system established by the Cuban revolution is unique! We don't have to go anywhere to learn anything; rather we could say, come here to learn how a democratic electoral system functions. [Applause]

Participation of all the people in defense

There is something else associated with this. I think our concept of defense is unique, considering the way it has developed, with the total participation of the masses. Other countries have very good things, I wouldn't deny it, there are others. But we feel we have our own form and concept of how to organize defense with the participation of all the people — workers, students, men and women, so that millions are actively involved in defense.

To some of the Western countries that question democracy in Cuba we can say: there can't be a democracy superior to that in which the workers, the peasants, and the students have the weapons. They have the weapons! [Applause] To all those Western countries that question democracy in Cuba we can say: give weapons to the workers, give weapons to the peasants, give weapons to the students, and we'll see whether tear gas will be hurled against any strike, against any organization that struggles for peace, against the students; [Applause] whether the

police can be ordered to attack them while wearing masks and all those contrivances that make them look like space travelers; [Laughter] whether the dogs can be turned loose on the masses every time there's a strike or a peace demonstration or a people's struggle.

I believe that the supreme test of democracy is arming the people! [Applause] When defense becomes the task of all the people and weapons become the prerogative of all the people, then they can talk about democracy. Until then they can talk about special police forces and the armies to crush the people when the people protest against abuse and injustices under a bourgeois system, whether in a capitalist Third World country or in a developed capitalist country.

What do we see on television constantly? What do we see on the news from the United States, from Europe, which boasts so much about its democratic institutions? What we see is the people being trampled upon by experts in repression and brutality, something which has never been seen during these 30 years of revolution in our country, and I believe these are typical characteristics of our revolution.

I'd dare to say — and it would pain me if anybody feels hurt by this — that the level of massive internationalist awareness reached by our people has never been reached by any other country. [Applause] And we have proof of this every day, not just from statistics — more than 300,000 of our compatriots have fulfilled internationalist missions in Angola through our Revolutionary Armed Forces. [Prolonged applause] That does not include civilian workers. This is shown by the fact that at this moment there are 50,000 of our compatriots in Angola and something still more important: if 50,000 ad-

"More than 300,000 of our compatriots have fulfilled internationalist missions in Angola through our Revolutionary Armed Forces . . ."

ditional fighters would have been needed, our people would have been capable of sending them! [Applause]

30,000 teachers stepped forward

Proof is in the fact that when 2,000 teachers were needed for Nicaragua, 30,000 stepped forward, and when the contras murdered a number of Cuban teachers, 100,000 stepped forward, practically all the primary schoolteachers in our country. [Applause]

Proof is in the fact that when an earthquake hit Peru, more than 100,000 blood donations were made throughout the country in 10 days, 10 days! [Applause] And proof is in the fact that in the wake of the Armenian earthquake more than 30,000 Cubans — just from the capital, mind you, not the whole country — donated their blood. [Applause] And I saw the spirit with which our compatriots from the capital had decided to make hundreds of thousands of donations if they were needed, just from the capital.

We tried to do everything in a highly organized way so that not a single drop of blood would be lost, so that it could be processed properly, and the period of donations was limited since no more blood is needed, but the capital could have easily made 50,000, 60,000 donations, which is equivalent — if the whole country had donated — to 250,000 blood donations. That's the kind of spirit we saw!

We normally have 400,000, 500,000 donations a year, but our people are capable of donating that much in a month if we had the facilities to collect it, store it, and process it. I think it is an extraordinary proof of internationalism.

I saw the proof every day I came to visit this center and I found out that everybody was saying, "Listen, count on me. Listen, I'm not on the list yet. Listen, we want to go to repair the damage caused by the hurricane in Nicaragua. We want to go to Armenia."

Our problem whenever we meet a group of workers is that they are constantly asking us for the honor going to help rebuild in Bluefields or going to help rebuild in Armenia.

I think that the internationalist spirit of our people has reached extremely high levels, and we can feel proud of this.

Was it like that before? Can anyone find in a bourgeois society a young man who says: "Listen, I want to go to Bluefields. Listen, I want to go to Armenia to build. Listen, I want to go on a mission, to support the people of Angola or any other people?" That was nowhere to be seen. It's inconceivable. It's inconceivable in a bourgeois society where man is alienated, where moral and ethical values practically don't count at all. Yet volunteering for an internationalist mission is a common thing among our workers, among our young people.

I think that our people's spirit of cooperation with

Third World countries doesn't exist in any other Third World country. A country like Cuba, struggling for development, has reached extremely high levels in international cooperation, too. Our doctors are in scores of countries, our construction workers, our teachers are there donating their services, and we're the country with the highest number of foreign students per capita. Just on the Isle of Youth there are more than 18,000 foreign students. I think that's also a unique, extraordinary experience linking our people with the rest of the world.

That characterizes the spirit of our revolution and what our revolution has created, which gives us so much satisfaction, in which we should trust. And we must carry on with that creative spirit, the noble undertaking of building socialism in our country.

Botanical Gardens

Speaking of this, I had nearly forgotten to speak about Expo Cuba. I had not only forgotten about Expo Cuba but also about the Botanical Gardens as well. We had resolved to also inaugurate the Botanical Gardens today. We're now in the middle, with the Botanical Gardens to one side of us and Expo Cuba on the other.

Establishing the Botanical Gardens took many years, 20 years. Naturally the Botanical Gardens had to be made by planting many tiny plants, seedlings. At times we grew impatient and said, "Can't trees be transplanted?" But the experts replied, "Seedlings grow to be more resistant than transplanted trees." Anyway, we have there a number of transplanted trees because we had no other choice, certain types of palm trees, etc.

It has taken 20 years to create the Botanical Gardens! It covers 600 hectares. I think it is an extraordinary scientific center, a task for which, from a scientific viewpoint, the University of Havana, its biology branch, was responsible. Today it has become a reality, 20 years after work began to build it, and it's already in operation. We had to inaugurate it someday, and I think this is the day: Expo Cuba here and the Botanical Gardens there. The main installations have been completed. Always in these centers there's something to be built, to be added, new needs spring up. But now the Botanical Gardens are a reality as real as Expo Cuba, with the difference that in the Botanical Gardens the trees are green and in Expo Cuba the trees have yet to turn green, because the landscaping has just been completed, and it'll take a few more weeks for it to turn green.

That's why we had decided to inaugurate today these two institutions to mark the 30th anniversary.

It must be recalled here the cooperation given to us by a German scientist, a true disciple of Alexander von Humboldt,² Professor Bisse, who helped us draw up the concept of the Botanical Gardens. Unfortunately, four years ago while working in our country, Professor Bisse was killed in a traffic accident, but he left us a legacy of many of his ideas, his concept of these Botanical Gardens.

Some comrades spoke here today about Expo Cuba before I did. Its director mentioned very interesting facts, and so did the comrade in charge of construction. I've already said this was a project of the minibrigades.

If anything else remains to be said, it would be that from the standpoint of construction this project was a true learning process. The practical methods used, the savings in materials, the use of light-weight steel for the sections, all this offers us a construction method that can be used to speed up many projects, given that the construction technique utilized here can be applied to building warehouses, supermarkets, and other projects.

Already in Santiago de Cuba there are plans to use the same technique in the railroad station so that it can be finished before the 4th Party congress of the Communist Party of Cuba. On the basis of these experiences we can solve countless other problems using the same construction technique.

I have to say that normally some steel structures weigh 60 kilograms [132 pounds] per square meter and these weigh 20.

Functional and beautiful

It should be said that the draftsmen, technicians, designers, all of them Cuban, who planned the project on the basis of a given idea have, in my opinion, really covered themselves with glory, because they have made it functional and beautiful. The idea that was given to them about what we wanted, they developed it or rather they extended it and achieved truly impressive results. This is one point worthy of being singled out — the work done by the draftsmen, architects, engineers, designers.

Another thing worthy of being singled out was the spirit of cooperation. More than 100 different enterprises worked together to make Expo Cuba.

There was outstanding support by all the agencies for the project because they were committed to the mere idea of having a pavilion there to exhibit their wares.

As I was saying a few days ago at a meeting with Expo Cuba workers and the workers who built it, I had often

visited this place but I hadn't discovered Expo Cuba. It was just recently, on a day I was riding around all the buildings, that I realized how gigantic the project is.

I think it has been a great accomplishment of enormous usefulness and that the experiences we can derive from this work will be very important for our economy, not just through the exhibits but also by relying on the experience gained in building Expo Cuba.

A true record was set in the time it was completed, because from the moment the idea emerged and it was explained to a group of comrades and they were given the job to build it, until the moment it was completed, hardly 24 months have passed. Throughout all that period the plans were drawn up; the draftsmen worked at the construction site; the earth moving operations began 20 months ago, and not with many resources or much labor power. The project really got going hardly a year ago, in December 1987, and they have accomplished the feat of finishing it a few hours prior to this ceremony. We could say that Expo Cuba was completed early this morning. [Applause]

I was here just five days ago, and they still had many sidewalks, staircases, and a string of other things to finish. And the essential, the fundamental things are now finished.

Whenever visitors came the first thing they asked was whether this was going to be finished. And I recall that one day when I was with the workers, the same comrade who wrote the hymn, as I was about to ask whether the project would be finished by January 1, suddenly said to me, "We have here some verses called 'yes, it'll be finished,' that we read to everybody who comes here and pesters us, asking if this will be finished." [Applause] I was lucky that they showed me the verses before I asked whether the project would be finished on time!

Naturally, I was confident that, yes, they were going to finish it, because I know what people can do when they are determined, when a person applies himself, when a person proposes to do something.

The work shift here lasted 14, 15 hours, sometimes more, and there were many occasions when the workers stayed at the job during two consecutive shifts, 24 hours and even 30 hours. Those were the hours of voluntary work that they did after putting in eight hours of work, plus the hours they put in on free Saturdays and on Sundays. It's impressive!

3,500 hours of voluntary work

I recall being introduced to Comrade Avelino during one of my visits here. I was told he was going to put in I don't know how many hours of voluntary work, and he did it. How many hours were they? ["3,500!"] Thirty-five hundred hours! Many more voluntary hours than those in ordinary shifts throughout the whole year. Every time I came here I bumped into him, and his eyes at times were red from working so hard.

It's that sort of thing we wouldn't want them to do, but who can stop them? No one pushed him into it. No one appealed to him or asked him to do it. It was his own decision when he said, "I'm going to do so many thousand hours."

On many occasions I came at night or in the early

morning and I always saw him there, with reddened eyes, as I said, and I wondered how this comrade could withstand it. And here he is now. He was the first to get his 3,500 voluntary hours diploma, and looking younger than ever. [Applause]

I was impressed, while giving out the diplomas, when some of them told me: "I'm already on the list of those going to Bluefields," or else, "I'm not on the list and I want to be included on that list to go to Bluefields." I already told them that not everybody could go to either Bluefields or Armenia — about Armenia the Soviets still have to decide if they are going to take workers from other countries to help with the reconstruction.

The help to reconstruct Bluefields has already been agreed upon with Nicaragua, and I think that within a few days they'll be working there. I repeat that, naturally, not everybody can go to Bluefields or to Armenia.

When I was talking about the internationalist spirit of our people I should have recalled that 300,000 construc-

“We said that any peace accord for southwestern Africa would have to be made on the basis of principles . . .”

tion workers volunteered to help reconstruct Armenia. That's a truly impressive figure. [Applause] Of course we can't send 300,000, nor 30,000 or 10,000 there. It'll have to be a rather symbolic but in a sense effective contribution. Perhaps 1,000, 2,000, maybe even 3,000. We could do it provided the Soviets decide to accept them, but the important thing is that 300,000 stepped forward.

If there's anything still to be said about this project it is that anyone touring it in its entirety — and he'd have to walk for kilometers — if he was told that the country has invested there \$50 million in parts imported from capitalist countries, he would think it logical, normal. However, in this project, where the bookkeeping was done down to the last penny for everything that was bought — whether it be the raw materials for some paints, or photographic materials, or electrical materials, or materials of different kinds, or some motor of a type we don't have, or some kinds of lamps we don't have — the investment was \$5.6 million in convertible currency, in today's dollars, which are worth practically nothing. It's really incredible when you see the results. They're making precise estimates on all the materials from socialist countries, what the cost was — not the cost of finished products, as the enterprises figure it now, but the cost of the raw materials, above all the steel from the socialist countries, mainly the USSR, and we think it won't exceed 7 or 8 million rubles.

If anybody were told that project was worth \$150 million, he would accept it without much ado. I'm certain that in the United States this project would be worth not less than \$150 million, excluding the land, which inflates

Continued on next page



Sugarcane worker on cooperative farm. "Our agriculture exports food for 40 million people in other parts of the world, 40 million!" Castro said.

2. A prominent German naturalist (1769-1859) who made an expedition to Cuba and Central and South America at the turn of the 19th century.

Continued from previous page

the cost of projects there.

The project has cost roughly 30 million pesos. And if it's borne in mind that it was built by minibrigade members, the salary component could be deducted, which means that building the project didn't involve a single cent of additional expenses, in the main. Naturally, some agencies helped with the construction, but using workers from those agencies. It wasn't new labor power hired to do construction work.

Feat worthy of 30th anniversary

I think that even the convertible currency expenses can be recovered in less than three years, inasmuch as we consider that future international fairs scheduled for Havana can be, and even ought to be, staged in this national exhibition center to help recover the convertible currency expenses in a short time by leasing the premises to foreign enterprises. And I think that the workers here have really accomplished a feat worthy of the 30th anniversary.

I'm aware that I've taken a long time to say all this. However, there are still a few more things that I shouldn't fail to mention today, of an international nature. [Applause]

It's very difficult to fail to associate this 30th anniversary with the peace accords for southwestern Africa.

I already spoke on December 5 about the factors that led to the last effort made by our country in Angola, the critical situation that had developed there, the need to save that situation. I explained all that, and I shouldn't repeat it now.

My compatriots will recall, too, how we said that any peace accord would have to be made on the basis of principles and that if it wasn't on the basis of principles, there would be no peace accords. And we said very clearly, in the face of certain demands by the racist South Africans, that there would be no accord if we had to comply with certain demands and that, if necessary, we were prepared to remain there 10, 15, 20 more years. In all this we were acting in close coordination with the government of the People's Republic of Angola.

Finally, the last obstacles were overcome and the agreements were signed on the bases you know. I believe this also was an extraordinary victory won by our people's internationalist spirit.

But this is not the time for singing praise for what was done. That's a historic task that ought to be written some day in all detail. What matters now is the fact that those accords were reached and were signed at the United Nations. Now comes a very important part of this process, which is the implementation of UN Resolution 435, adopted more than 10 years ago. This is one fundamental question, for it is associated with the question of the independence of Namibia, for which tens of thousands of SWAPO [South West Africa People's Organisation] fighters have fought during many years and for which many sacrificed their lives.

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It is now in order to set up all the conditions so that the elections can be held in an independent Namibia, which ought to decide its fate. And we are all aware of the immense support that, logically, the Namibian independence fighters have among the people.

However, certain obstacles have now arisen. And on this subject, so as not to leave anything to improvising and in order to say everything with precision and clarity, I brought here some papers that I wish to read.

Amending Resolution 435

It is necessary for our people and international opinion to clearly know the difficulties that have arisen due to certain attempts at amending UN Security Council Resolution 435. The idea of making such amendments stems from the United States, a permanent member of that council.

During the course of the four-party negotiations, our delegation spoke very early about the need to have the UN Security Council guarantee all the accords that were

“For first time in UN history there is a clash between views of the permanent members of the Security Council and views of the Third World on a matter of great importance . . .”

reached and that the UN become the guarantor of their fulfillment.

Following the signing of the three-party accords among Angola, Cuba, and South Africa, and the two-party accord between Angola and Cuba, the group of countries belonging to the Movement of Nonaligned Countries, which were also at the time sitting on the Security Council, submitted a draft resolution for that purpose. This was independent of another resolution that the council must also approve, specifically referring to the steps that must be taken now to comply with the original resolution regulating the process of Namibian independence, No. 435, approved more than 10 years ago, in September 1978.

The Security Council, as you know, is made up of 15 members, of which five are permanent and 10 are rotated and elected by all the other countries.

Simultaneously with this proposal by a group of Third World countries that included six Nonaligned nations and Brazil, the five UN Security Council permanent members — the United States, the Soviet Union, France, China, and Britain — presented to the council another draft resolution. It makes reference to the accords but at the same time introduces considerations that represent modifications of the plan for implementing Resolution 435 and that for that reason were rejected by the group of Nonaligned countries belonging to the council. These countries are Yugoslavia, Nepal, Senegal, Algeria, Argentina, and Zambia. The latter two are being replaced in January by Colombia and Ethiopia.

The essence of the proposal of the five permanent members is the need to reduce the cost of the Namibian independence process, on grounds, it is claimed, that the estimates were made 10 years ago and that at present, apart from the inflation afflicting the world economy, which makes it bigger, the UN is facing financial difficulties. It is similarly claimed that just the signing of the accords has created favorable conditions allowing for reduced costs through the dispatch of fewer international battalions than what was calculated in great detail in Resolution 435.

It must be said that the approval of these resolutions is a key step in the dynamics started by the four-party negotiation process, for it is precisely through the approval that the UN secretary-general will be empowered by the Security Council to begin the decolonization of Namibia and leading that country to independence.

Cuba shares the concern of the members of the Nonaligned Movement inside the Security Council, because any consideration of a financial nature must take into account, above all, the political consequences that may derive from this.

It must be remembered that Resolution 435 of 1978 has become the essential element that defines how Namibia will gain independence.

This resolution was, at the time it was first approved, the fruit of the concerted action of a group of Western countries, including the United States, for which it can hardly be judged as partial to the interests of the SWAPO fighters, or as having failed to take into account the demands then made by South Africa, with which discussions were held in detail during the process of drafting the resolution, more than 10 years ago. After it was ignored by the South African government, the first real possibility is now at hand to implement it, thanks to the peace process to which Angola and Cuba have contributed in a major way.

The international forces that should be arriving in Namibia have an irreplaceable function in the steps foreseen for independence.

Supervising the cease-fire

It is up to them to supervise the cease-fire, assign the South African troops and the SWAPO forces to certain areas, supervise the withdrawal of South African troops and prevent infiltrations along Namibia's borders, as well as watch over the disintegration of all local troops set up by South Africa throughout seven decades of colonial domination.

The civilian components of the UN assistance group for the transition period in Namibia ought to play, in turn, an indispensable role in supervising more than 400 polling places for the elections over a territory of more than 800,000 square kilometers.

These calculations made 10 years ago took into account the then existing Namibian population, which has grown by 50 percent over the period, just as the number of voters, who will decide who is to rule the country after the South African withdrawal, has also constantly increased.

In 1978, seven battalions of UN troops were estimated as necessary for all these functions. They must control the fallback of several tens of thousands of South African troops amounting to more than twice the number present 10 years ago. The forces of the territorial army, natives dependent on South Africa, are estimated at more than 20,000 men. And the police, also trained by the South Africans, number today more than 8,000 men, which is many times larger than the figure when Resolution 435 was adopted.

On the other hand, the rationale that the accords allow for a reduction in the number of men at the border with Angola is also unrealistic, for this zone has never been considered as a destabilizing factor for the Namibian independence process. Instead, the area that was always regarded as requiring extreme vigilance during the election process and during the formation of an independent government was precisely the border between Namibia and South Africa, the country which for 73 years colonized that territory.

A danger that exists during this delicate transition period is the operations of paramilitary groups that South Africa could organize with members of the Namibian territorial forces, who helped enslave their own people. The presence of the international forces sent by the UN is the

“What sort of democracy is there in the UN if what is left of the old British Empire can veto Security Council resolutions, and India, with 15 times Britain's population, doesn't have that right? . . .”

only guarantee for the holding of elections, for which the South African regime has been creating favorable conditions over a number of years for sectors inclined to its colonial and neocolonial interests.

Most brutal forms of colonialism

We can't ignore the important role these international military and civilian forces will play in the process leading up to independence, in creating a favorable psychological climate, giving confidence to a people subjected to the most brutal forms of colonialism for seven decades.

We are not opposed to efforts to cut costs in implementing Resolution 435, if possible; but there must be no change in its basic aims. No reduction can affect what the UN forces should represent in controlling the withdrawal of the South African army, dissolving the puppet army, bringing the police force under control and reducing it, protecting the people and organizing the return of more than 80,000 Namibian refugees to their country, and creating a climate that will facilitate fair elections, the formation of a government, and independence.

That is what is being debated in New York now: If the letter and spirit of the Namibian independence agreements are to be respected or if, allegedly to cut costs, the right of the Namibian people to self-determination is jeopardized.

Cuba has stated its views on this delicate issue to the governments of the Soviet Union, China, France, and Britain. In New York, during the final rounds of negotiations, we also explained our views to U.S. representatives.

The United States is the main sponsor of these reductions, under the pretext of cutting costs. We feel this is not just another agreement, not just another resolution or document, or a new statement. What is at stake is infinitely more important, something for which thousands of Namibian fighters have given their lives, for which An-

golan support contributed to Namibian liberation and for which Cubans have died over the last 13 years of confrontations with the arrogant South Africans in Angola.

What is at stake now is whether or not the mechanisms of the UN will be capable of facilitating the expression of the legitimate will of the Namibian people; of assuring the aspirations of the international community, virtually unanimous, for the peace process in southwestern Africa.

This is not just a financial issue, for the United States, which is a cosponsor of Resolution 435, knows very well that any reduction of international troops benefits South Africa.

Cuba will maintain its principles

In this battle Cuba will maintain its principled positions as it did during the difficult months of negotiations with South Africa and the United States.

Our country is not a member of the Security Council, but it is deeply committed to the cause of Namibian independence and strict respect for the instrument created for this purpose, that is, Resolution 435, and it is committed to the position of the Movement of Nonaligned Countries, clearly expressed by seven of its members who have seats on the Security Council.

We also feel that in a period such as this, when it would seem that at least in some regions there are chances for negotiated solutions — which, of course, are only possible through the tenacious struggle of the peoples — the prestige and authority of the UN must be upheld as never before, and this is a responsibility for all, especially the permanent members of the council.

What I have read is the core of the issue, and it is very important, so that the efforts of Namibians and other peoples over so many years won't be foiled.

There is a circumstance in this dispute that could be considered new. For the first time in the history of the UN, there is a clash between the views of the permanent members of the Security Council on one hand, with strong U.S. influence being upheld, and the views of the Third World, in this case represented by the Movement of Nonaligned Countries, on the other — on a matter of great importance to the peoples of the Third World, related in general to the struggle against apartheid and in particular to the elimination of the last vestiges of colonialism, as well as sovereignty for Namibia.

This unique and unprecedented event raises the issue — and I say so with a deep sense of responsibility, because we are very concerned about what is happening on this problem — the touchy matter of democratization of the UN.

There are things that are so sacred, so imposed by habits and customs, that they seem untouchable. But it seems the time has come to deal with this problem. Otherwise, the development of new concepts of international relations is out of the question.

We have the right to ask what sort of democracy there is in the UN if what is left of the old British empire, which for centuries ruled over much of the world on all continents — Great Britain — with a population of 50 million has the right to veto Security Council resolutions and a country such as India — to mention just one — with 750 million inhabitants, 15 times the population of Britain and which was a British colony, doesn't have that right.

We could mention other countries of great economic or industrial importance in the world, or with large populations, or prestige at the UN, who don't have that prerogative. In the Third World there are countries such as Brazil, Mexico, and Nigeria, to mention only those with larger populations and more territory than Britain.

The Third World as a whole has a population of not less than 4 billion people and their most sacred interests, aspirations, or hopes can be foiled simply by the veto of any of the five permanent members. The United States has made use of this privilege countless times.

Diametrically different world

Nearly 50 years have passed since the end of World War II, and we live in a diametrically different world that must have different norms. And now we see that 4 billion human beings of the part of the world that was colonized, exploited, enslaved, and bled dry, 4 billion people have no rights of this sort at all. I think this is a very important issue that we should think about, and it is our duty to sincerely raise the issue at this time, when we witness a new experience as a result of the dispute in the Security Council regarding Resolution 435. I think it is something that Cuban and especially world public opinion should closely follow.

We have exhausted all our recourse of talks, contacts, and argument with the members of the Security Council, and so far apparently the desired results have not been achieved. There can be many ways to cut costs. African countries that are closer to Namibia than countries on



Impact Visuals/Marisa Lauré

Cuban soldiers in Menongue, Angola, the day after South Africa suffered decisive defeat last March by Cuban and Angolan troops in strategic battle for town of Cuito Cuanavale. Menongue was the air base from which Cuban planes struck South African troops during conflict. "The level of internationalist awareness reached by our people has never been reached by any other country," said Castro. More than 300,000 Cubans volunteered to serve in Angola.

other continents could be asked to help. I'm sure that many African countries would be willing, at minimum expenses, to maintain the indispensable number of battalions in Namibia. There are many ways to cut costs, and we aren't opposed to that. It's too bad that we can't be there, because we could send the seven battalions and not charge a cent. [Applause] But under the circumstances we can't because we are a party to the conflict.

But there are countries such as Nigeria, Ethiopia, and Tanzania, many countries of Africa that would gladly cooperate at minimum costs, reducing the cost of transportation and spending of all sorts. Getting seven battalions together isn't difficult.

At first the United States was talking about a reduction from seven to three battalions — which is really alarming — and now we have this problem in the Security Council, which we are duty bound to explain, for everyone will have to assume the corresponding responsibility if the South Africans are able to in any way frustrate Namibia's right to independence, using fraud, pressure, or terror, to impose a puppet government.

We hope the problem will be solved, that there won't be arrogance on the part of permanent members of the Security Council and that a reasonable and just formula will be found together with the representatives of the Movement of Nonaligned Countries and the Third World on the Security Council.

We have worked in a very serious manner and, with the hope that these problems can be solved, are taking steps for strict fulfillment of the agreements signed at the Security Council in New York.

It is our responsibility to remove 3,000 soldiers between the signing of the agreement and April 1, when implementation of Resolution 435 starts. We have three full months for this withdrawal. It was a promise made as a

“Imperialists will apply their peculiar notion of peace, where peace is understood as being between big powers, while they reserve the right to attack Third World nations . . .

gesture of goodwill. Cuba and Angola asked the UN to confirm the withdrawal of our forces in the agreed-upon period. Therefore, on the 10th of this month the withdrawal of the 3,000 men will start. [Applause] The first Cuban internationalist fighters should arrive on January 11 from Angola. [Applause] It will be a total withdrawal, and all the details have been discussed. It will cover 27 months as of April 1 for the gradual and total withdrawal of our forces. Of course during this time we will have to rotate part of the personnel.

In the case of the 3,000 men, this is a total withdrawal

of troops. As far as we are concerned, we will strictly respect the agreements and hope others do likewise.

There is another aspect of international politics I would like to cover briefly. On December 5, as you know, when marking the anniversary of the *Granma* landing and the granting of the Ready for Defense flag to the capital, before hundreds of thousands of fighters, we discussed concepts related to defense and the need to always stay alert and ready to defend the country.

We must say something in a clear and sincere manner: we fully support the peace policy of the Soviet Union. This must be made clear because often the imperialist press in the Western countries keeps probing and trying to develop differences between Cuba and the USSR. Or they stress contradictions or exaggerate differences that can and do exist in the method of rectification and carrying forward the process of socialism, which need not become a source of friction in our relations with the Soviet Union.

I think we must base ourselves on the principle of absolute respect for the paths that every country follows or decides to follow in the construction of socialism. But there shouldn't be the slightest doubt that we fully support the peace policy of the Soviet Union. [Applause] Not only do we support it, we keenly appreciate it. We are aware of the importance of preventing nuclear war and halting the arms race. We realize the importance of having a peace policy prevail in the world, a policy of détente and peaceful coexistence between states with different social systems.

This is vital for the nations of the Third World, for many millions of human beings whom I mentioned, who suffer from the consequences of poverty and underdevelopment inherited from colonialism, where — as I said on December 5 — 120,000 children die every three days who could have been saved, which is equal to an atomic bomb exploding in their midst every three days. For these countries, burdened by debt and ruthlessly exploited by unequal terms of trade, who so desperately need a New International Economic Order, stopping the arms race and achieving détente, coexistence, and peace are indispensable. This is indispensable if there is to be any hope of dealing with problems such as the debt, eliminating the debt, having resources for development, ending unequal terms of trade and living in an economically more just world. Only the incredible sums for the arms race can provide the means for obtaining those goals.

For us it is of great historic and strategic importance that Comrade Gorbachev at the UN has upheld these Third World banners and endorsed the goals for which we have been struggling for years. We said the debt should be eliminated completely; Comrade Gorbachev spoke of a 100-year moratorium. In practice, it's the same to cancel payment for 100 years as to write it off. [Applause]

Linking disarmament, development, and the need for a New International Economic Order are key issues linked to peace on which we totally coincide and fully support. Who could oppose a peace policy?

Now then, regardless of the great gains that have been

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made — because Soviet policy has made itself felt on the international scene with a new climate, it has categorically and unquestionably demonstrated who are the friends and defenders of peace and disarmament in whose vanguard we find the Soviet Union in particular and other socialist countries, and this has been demonstrated more clearly than ever before — I warned that there was a risk, a very important issue to define: how peace was to be understood, what the imperialists interpret as peace and what they interpret as peaceful coexistence. We expressed our fears that the imperialists, as they have so often done before, will apply their peculiar notion of peace whereby peace is understood as being between the big powers, while they reserve the right to oppress, exploit, threaten, and attack the nations of the Third World. One day it could be Nicaragua, another Cuba or any other Third World nation, as has happened over the years.

World policeman

If the imperialists interpret peace to mean the right to apply their policy of world policeman, it is a matter of vital importance for these peoples, and it must be clearly defined.

Less than 30 days have passed since I made that speech and we have an example.

In the last few days the United States had made a big uproar over an alleged chemical weapons factory in Libya, and the president of the United States openly mentioned the possibility of an air attack on that factory. A U.S. naval squad moved into the Mediterranean after those threatening declarations, and there is a hysterical campaign in the United States intended to pave the way for an attack. The Libyans have said there is no such chemical weapons factory nor plan to build any. They are building a medicine plant. But I think even that explanation was unnecessary. Of course, we are not advocates of chemical weapons. We advocate the total elimination of all chemical weapons. But what's at stake here is the right of the United States to determine who may or may not manufacture chemical weapons, to decide that if a country manufactures chemical weapons it will be attacked and bombed. [Applause]

The United States has the largest chemical weapons arsenal, a powerful chemical weapons industry, and it feels it has the right to manufacture and stockpile chemical weapons, so how can it deny that right to any other country as long as there is no international agreement to eliminate chemical weapons and ban their production?

Even if Libya were in fact manufacturing chemical weapons, what right does the United States have to bomb that country? What right does it have to bomb that fac-

tory? Will the law of the jungle prevail in the world, the law of the strongest? Is that how the United States understands peace and détente? What security can there be for any Third World country under those circumstances?

Now a squadron is advancing to the Mediterranean, and even U.S. television has explained the technique the Pentagon will use. So they won't have to risk planes and ask for overflight rights from other countries, they will launch Cruise missiles from a submarine in the Mediterranean. In other words, modern technology at the service of bellicose aggression and threats against the people, war against the peoples of the Third World. This is shameful and repugnant, really outrageous, to see how they discuss what type of technology to use for their crimes.

Therefore, we can ask ourselves, what do the imperialists understand by peace?

We want peace and must strive for it, but a peace for all peoples, a peace with rights for all the peoples of the world! [Prolonged applause and shouts of "Fidel, for sure, hit the Yankees hard!"]

Peace with respect, peace with rights, peace with independence, peace with security for all peoples of the world, that's what we must seek!

These are the definitions that international public opinion demands. I think that now more than ever there must be a very clear international awareness of this issue.

There is a lot I could say about this. We could mention the fact that today, in particular, what we can describe as the propaganda and disinformation organs of imperialism are focused on Cuba. They have singled us out in particular. In the West they'd like to tell us what to do — I don't know what rare privilege we seem to have — we should do this or that, we shouldn't do this or that, we should imitate this, we should copy that or not copy it. They have transformed this, which is a matter related to the basic rights of our people, into a subject of almost daily discussion.

Of course, none of this scares us or affects our morale; on the contrary, it is a great honor, for we never felt we deserved such attention. We really don't want to give anybody sleepless nights and don't understand why we are such a source of concern to so many people.

Loyal to principles

What I can assure you, as I did in Santiago de Cuba on January 1, is that the revolution won't change. I think the secret of this revolution is having been loyal to principles from start to finish, having been loyal for 30 years and being willing to continue that way for another 30 or 100 years. [Applause]

I think this is the most important legacy we can leave for the new generations — the essential idea that we must be loyal to principles and there is only one honorable way to survive under conditions as difficult as those Cuba had

to face over the last 30 years: loyalty to principles and never letting yourself be intimidated by anything, not letting anything or anybody change the pure and straight line of the revolution. [Applause]

That's what we can offer our friends all over the world. Cuba will remain loyal, remain true to those principles. We feel duty bound to say so here because — as I said at the start — this is not our work; it is the work of all.

In Santiago de Cuba I explained that the revolution was not just the result of our struggle against Batista. It was the result and the fruit of more than 100 years of struggle by our people, of struggle by many generations ever since national feelings developed here.

The same can be said for our socialist revolution: it is not just the product of our efforts. It is the fruit of centuries of struggle by the peoples, the efforts of the working class since the last century, the fruit of the Paris Commune although it wasn't victorious, of the October revolution, the fruit of the struggle of all peoples to create a world without slavery and exploitation of man by man, a world of true justice.

A socialist revolution doesn't happen on a solitary planet. It happens in the world today where there are still great tragedies, where there is still an empire as powerful as the United States, where imperialism is still a reality and where there is still a group of industrialized capitalist nations who are rich and powerful and impose their selfish standards on much of the world.

Just trade relations

Our revolution is the fruit of international cooperation from all socialist countries and especially the Soviet Union. [Applause] We will never forget the support received at key moments when that support meant we did not lack the weapons needed for defense. We will never forget the economic cooperation, the just trade relations established with us by the most developed socialist coun-

tries, and especially those between the Soviet Union and Cuba.

The capitalists never tire of saying that this is a donation or subsidy for the Cuban revolution. What Third World nations have been seeking for decades, the just trade we have demanded so as not to be victims of the brutal drama of unequal terms of trade — the mechanism utilized by the developed capitalist countries to sell their products at ever higher prices and buy our exports at ever cheaper ones — this does not exist in the USSR's and other socialist countries' relations. Instead, there is a rational and just exchange, as should be the case, between developed and developing countries, even more just within a socialist community. The imperialists call that a subsidy, and you see it printed daily in all the dispatches. The fact that our sugar is bought at a different price and not at the junk level of the world market, where not a lot of sugar is sold, is something they view as a donation. The capitalist countries view this as a precedent that must be opposed, because its universal application would mean the end of one of the most repugnant forms of exploitation in the world today.

We will never forget the fact that between the other socialist countries and Cuba, between the Soviet Union and Cuba, it was possible to establish a new type of economic relationship that has made a great contribution to our development efforts and has been very significant in the battles and successes obtained in many fields. We never imagined that our people alone deserved credit for this; on the contrary, we said our people had to make an ever greater effort, be ever more efficient. And we said, at the same time as we attempted to carry this out, that our people had to convert every year into three or four. And I really think we are on that path.

But we could never forget what we have received from the world, what we have received from other peoples. We could never forget the moral and political support and solidarity that we have received from all over the world: Latin America, Asia, and Africa, by progressive, democratic, and revolutionary forces all over the world and in the capitalist countries themselves, where we have many friends who haven't fallen prey to the abusive and massive propaganda against the revolution.

Therefore at this ceremony and at this moment, on our 30th anniversary, the most important and essential thing that remains to be expressed is our gratitude to all of you, those who have been with us on this 30th anniversary, gratitude for what you represent, the just causes and noble ideas you express and symbolize.

On behalf of the people, we thank the hundreds of guests present here and their peoples!

Homeland or death!

We will win! [Ovation]

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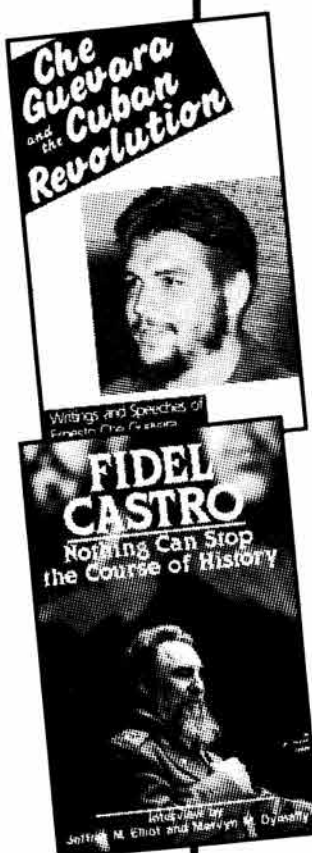
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Nicaragua coffee harvest ahead of last year

BY JUDY WHITE

MANAGUA, Nicaragua — "Up to the first week in January, we had harvested 20,450 tons of coffee, 7 percent more than we had harvested by that date last year." That was the announcement made by Julio César Muñoz of the Association of Rural Workers (ATC) at a meeting of 700 leaders of workers' and peasants' organizations here January 15. Muñoz is the ATC leader assigned to work with the union's locals on coffee farms throughout Nicaragua.

"What's more," Muñoz continued, "last year 80 percent of the coffee picked was export quality. This year we are averaging 90 percent, and on some farms we are up to 95 percent."

Coffee is Nicaragua's most important export crop. It accounts for more than 50 percent of Nicaragua's total foreign exchange earnings. All coffee exports are controlled by the state.

The goal for this year's harvest is almost 20 percent higher than what was produced last year. However, even if the goal is met, the crop still will be less than two-thirds of what was harvested in 1983 — the best year for coffee production since the Sandinista revolution came to power in 1979.

Some problems that interfered with meeting last year's goals have been overcome, Muñoz said in an interview a few days after the meeting. One of them, which the ATC has played a role in resolving, was the shortage of workers on the coffee farms.

The ATC organizes the majority of the 20,000 year-round workers in coffee production. The union also fights for wages and working conditions for the 50,000 additional workers who come to help on the harvest.

Fight for wages

"As soon as the harvest was finished last year, we began a fight so that — in the midst of the inflation and deterioration of the economy — wages would at least cover a minimal family food basket," Muñoz said. "We have been fighting for this since March."

"I say fighting," he added, "because some of the private producers are opposed to this. They don't want to negotiate with the union."

Some 30 percent of Nicaragua's coffee is produced on big capitalist farms, 50 percent by working farmers on small and medium-sized individual and collective farms, and the remainder by state enterprises.

A decent wage is necessary, Muñoz pointed out, to guarantee a stable labor supply on the coffee farms. As a result of gains made on this level, he said, "this year we met about 92 percent of national goals in cultivation of the plants."

"But we have to be clear on one point," he insisted. "The number one demand of

the workers hasn't been around wages. Rather, what we have tried to do with the collective-bargaining agreements is guarantee the social wage, that is, the working conditions that make it possible to stabilize the labor force."

"We are talking about housing, health services, job security, child-care centers. Right now we have 78 child-care centers functioning for the harvest. About 60 of them will remain permanently."

'More signs of peace'

Turning to the problems the farmers have faced in bringing in the crop, Muñoz said, "This year we had the hurricane. It looked like the conditions would be harder than last year." Hurricane Joan destroyed roads and some processing plants in the coffee zones.

But another important fact also has to be taken into consideration, he pointed out. "Last year the war was a bigger factor than this year. Contra actions in the coffee zones were minimal compared with other years. There are more signs of peace."

Since the March 1988 cease-fire between the Nicaraguan government and the contras, many coffee farmers have returned to their land. This year a brigade of 600 members of the National Union of Farmers and Ranchers (UNAG), which spent two months picking coffee in the former war zones, reports bringing in 42.5 tons on farms where no harvesting had taken place for the past three years because of the war.

To assemble the 50,000 harvesters and support personnel needed each year, volunteers are recruited from throughout the country. They are organized into brigades to work in the coffee zones for one to three months. Those who take a leave from their workplaces receive wages and benefits from their regular jobs plus the wages they make picking coffee.

There are brigades organized by the Sandinista Workers Federation (CST) and other progovernment trade unions, by UNAG, and by student organizations. There are also brigades of supporters of the revolution from other countries.

In this year's harvest, the *brigadistas* organized by the CST have the highest per capita daily average of coffee picked, even though many of them are unaccustomed to the rigors of life and work in the Nicaraguan countryside.

Muñoz considers this an important fact. The CST brigadistas "are making a bigger contribution than the others," he said. "If we were all like them, production would be less costly. Some of these *compañeros* pick for two or more workers."

"The political-ideological significance of this has to do with a commitment to be in the vanguard, to be the best worker, to make the biggest contribution to society."



Militant/Larry Seigle

Harvesting coffee in Nicaragua's Matagalpa Province

These *compañeros* don't pick more simply out of economic necessity. They stand out because of their consciousness."

The ATC views expanding coffee production as decisive to alleviating Nicaragua's economic crisis in the next few

years.

"What we are proposing," Muñoz said, "is the recovery of coffee cultivation. We are proposing that the state develop a program to use modern technology on a limited acreage to raise coffee yields."

—WORLD NEWS BRIEFS—

Grenada: ruling party drops Blaize as leader

Grenada's prime minister, Herbert Blaize, was ousted as leader of the ruling New National Party (NNP) at its annual convention held over the January 21 weekend. Blaize will continue as prime minister of the government until general elections are held at the end of the year.

The 71-year-old prime minister lost the party leadership post by a vote of 190 to 154 to Keith Mitchell, who is also the government's minister of communications and works.

The NNP was thrown together from the remnants of several capitalist parties following the 1983 U.S. military invasion of the island. The invasion came in the wake of a military coup against the People's Revolutionary Government of Prime Minister Maurice Bishop. The coup was led by the then deputy prime minister, Bernard Coard. Bishop and several of his cabinet members were killed during the coup.

In the U.S.-sponsored election held the following year the NNP won all but one of 15 parliamentary seats.

The NNP fractured in 1987 when three cabinet members resigned their government posts and left the party expressing disagreements over government-initiated austerity measures and layoffs of government employees. The economic crisis in Grenada has continued to deepen. The NNP now holds a 9-to-6 majority in the Parliament.

Taiwan strikes halt rail, bus services

Strikes took place throughout Taiwan's transportation industry February 1. The strikes were sparked by the refusal of companies to pay Chinese New Year bonuses. Taiwan's labor laws entitle workers to an annual performance bonus but set no guidelines for their amount.

Chang Kou-an, who resigned last week from the government labor council, accused workers of abusing their rights since the government legalized strikes last year.

Most northbound trains were canceled January 31 as 200 workers at the Kaohsiung station refused to conduct equipment inspections. The workers returned to work only after the company agreed to

issue the bonus pay by the next day.

In Fengyan some 300 bus drivers were on strike demanding a bonus of about two months' wages, or four times what management has promised.

At Taipei's international airport, 250 sales clerks at duty-free shops stood in front of counters and linked hands after authorities ordered them to fold up protest banners. The clerks are demanding twice the bonus offered them by management.

The strikes over bonus pay have involved another 2,000 workers in the automobile, textile, and chemical industries.

Rightists win seats in West German elections

About 10,000 people took to the streets in West Berlin January 30 to demonstrate against the unexpected capture of 11 seats in the 144-member city parliament by the extreme right-wing Republican Party.

Protesters carried signs that read, "Nazis out!" "Shame!" and "Never again fascists!" Others called for immediate prohibition of Republicans and "all other fascist organizations." The Republican Party's national chairman, Franz Schönhuber, is a former SS officer.

The large vote for the Republican Party was fueled in part by its appeal to sentiments opposing immigrant workers in West Germany. About 225,000 immigrants live in West Berlin, 11 percent of the population, according to the city's commissioner for foreigners, Barbara John.

The Republican Party campaigns for the deportation of immigrants living in West Germany illegally, life imprisonment for drug dealers, prioritizing jobs for Germans, and prioritizing housing for longtime West Berlin residents.

West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl, whose Christian Democrats have suffered five consecutive setbacks in regional elections, said the election result showed an urgent need to look at the policy toward foreigners and the housing situation.

The U.S., British, and French governments still formally administer West Berlin. In the past they have banned far-right parties from city politics, including the neo-Nazi National Democratic Party.

Connecticut electrical union local fights political firing

BY GREG McCARTAN

Local 244 of the International Union of Electrical Workers (IUE) is fighting the firing of union member Peter Krala by Norden Systems of Norwalk, Connecticut.

Norden Systems is a division of United Technologies, and contracts with the U.S. Department of Defense for the production of war matériel.

As a second-shift stockroom worker Krala had won 100 percent of his coworkers to become union members. Norden is an open shop, which means union membership is optional for hourly employees. Seven days before he was fired, Krala had filed a grievance against the company for instituting a new labor grade in the stockroom at \$1 an hour less than required by the contract. The company told Krala he was dismissed for "improper use of time and for interfering with his coworkers."

Krala is also a member of the Young Socialist Alliance. "I have always encouraged my coworkers to fight back when unfairly put upon, generally through the union," he said. "Our discussion of conditions at Norden Systems of necessity takes a political turn. The company appears to take a dim view of this," he added.

The case has attracted attention in the local media, including a feature article in the *New Haven Advocate*.

Jim Southworth, Local 244 president, told the *Advocate*, "Pete was very above board. They [Norden] know he is a socialist. That might have been an underlying reason [for the firing], but they never mentioned it. We feel it is for his union activity."

The local president explains that the company initially tried to build a case against Krala by getting five workers to make unsigned statements supporting Norden's charges. All five have since told the union they will repudiate the statements.

Southworth told the *Advocate*, "Reinstating Pete would send a strong message to the workers that the company can't do everything it wants. It can't violate state and federal laws at its whim. So we feel it will be a tough fight."

The union is urging that messages protesting the firing be sent to the company, to: Edwin Decker, president, Norden Systems, Norden Place, Norwalk, Conn. 06856, with copies to: IUE Local 244, 370 Huntington Rd., Bridgeport, Conn. 06608.

ARIZONA

Phoenix

U.S. Aid to Nicaragua Now. A two-part presentation by Harvey McArthur, *Militant* reporter in Nicaragua for past three years. Sat., Feb. 11. Part I: "Peasants Fight for Land in the Nicaraguan Revolution." 4 p.m., dinner 6 p.m. Part II: "Eyewitness Report on Hurricane Joan and the Challenge Facing the Nicaraguan Revolution." 7 p.m. Translation to Spanish. 1809 W Indian School Rd. Donation: \$4 for both presentations, \$3 for dinner. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (602) 279-5850.

CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

What's Behind the Miami Rebellion. Speaker: Thabo Ntweng, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of Miami. Translation to Spanish. Sat., Feb. 11, 7:30 p.m. 2546 W Pico Blvd. Donation: \$4. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (213) 380-9460.

Report on 30th Anniversary Celebration of Cuban Revolution. Speaker: Ron Poulsen, member of Australia-Cuba Friendship Society. Translation to Spanish. Sun., Feb. 12, 3 p.m. 2546 W Pico Blvd. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (213) 380-9460.

San Francisco

Film: Autobiography of Malcolm X. Thurs., Feb. 16 and Fri., Feb. 17 at 7:30 and 9:15 both nights. York Theatre, 2789 24th St.

Why They Can't Bury Malcolm X: The Importance of His Ideas Today. Speakers: National Committee Socialist Workers Party; representative of Young Socialist Alliance. Translation to Spanish. Sat., Feb. 18, 7:30 p.m. 3284 23rd St. (near Mission). Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (415) 282-6255.

GEORGIA

Atlanta

Prospects for Communism Today. Speaker: Maceo Dixon, Socialist Workers Party. Sat., Feb. 11, 7:30 p.m. 132 Cone St. NW, 2nd floor. Donation: \$2.50. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (404) 577-4065.

Release Nelson Mandela and All Political Prisoners! Speaker: Tsietse Moleho, leader of Release Mandela Committee and activist with United Democratic Front of South Africa. Sat., Feb. 11, 3 - 5:30 p.m. Atlanta-Fulton Co. Public Library, Room 314 (downtown at Margaret Mitchell Sq.). Sponsor: Georgia Coalition for Divestment in Southern Africa; Mozambique Support Network; Socialist Workers Party; Southern Africa Education Project/AFSC; others. For more information call (404) 688-7422.

Learning About Socialism: The Truth About the Cuban Revolution. A Socialist Workers Party/Young Socialist Alliance class series held every Thursday night at 7:30 p.m., Feb. 16 - March 16. 132 Cone St. NW, 2nd floor. Donation: \$2.50. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (404) 577-4065.

ILLINOIS

Chicago

Malcolm X: His Revolutionary Legacy for Today. Speaker: Eric Flint, Socialist Workers Party, member United Food and Commercial Workers Local 100-A. Translation to Spanish. Sat., Feb. 11, 6 p.m. 6826 S Stony Island Ave. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (312) 363-7322 or 363-7136.

Solidarity with the Struggles in El Salvador and Nicaragua Today. Speakers: Jim Kendrick, Socialist Workers Party, member Transportation and Communication Union Local 695; Lee Ravencroft, tecNICA; representative of Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador. Translation to Spanish. Sat., Feb. 18, 6 p.m. 6826 S Stony Island Ave. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (312) 363-7322 or 363-7136.

Dance-Party Fundraiser for El Salvador. Sat., Feb. 18, 8 p.m. Axe Street Arena, 2778 N Milwaukee Ave. Donation: \$3. Funds go to aid the March 18 El Salvador demonstration. Sponsor: El Salvador Action Coalition. For more information call (312) 227-2720 or 227-2587.

MARYLAND

Baltimore

Malcolm X: International Leader for Working People. Speaker: James Harris, National Committee Socialist Workers Party. Sat., Feb. 18. Dinner 6 p.m.; program 7:30 p.m. 2913 Greenmount Ave. Donation: dinner \$3; forum \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (301) 235-0013.

MASSACHUSETTS

Boston

Cuba: 30 Years of Revolution. Speakers: Don Gurewitz and Betsy Soares, trade unionists just returned from Cuba. Translation to Spanish. Sat., Feb. 11, 7:30 p.m. 605 Massachusetts Ave. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (617) 247-6772.

El Hajj Malik El-Shabazz. Film and discussion on Malcolm X and the fight for freedom today. Translation to Spanish and French. Sat., Feb. 18, 7:30 p.m. 605 Massachusetts Ave. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (617) 247-6772.

MINNESOTA

St. Paul

Mississippi Burning: Fact and Fiction. Speakers: Stu Singer, executive director of the Mark Curtis Defense Committee, staff member of Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee in Mississippi in 1966; Dean Zimmerman, SNCC organizer during 1964 Freedom Summer. Sat., Feb. 18, 7:30 p.m. 508 N Snelling Ave. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (612) 644-6325.

Malcolm X's Legacy for Today. Speakers: Wendy Lyons, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor; Sam Grant, community activist. Showing of *Malcolm X: the Struggle for Freedom*. Sat., Feb. 25, 7:30 p.m. 508 N Snelling Ave. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (612) 644-6325.

MISSOURI

Kansas City

In Defense of Communism: Perestroika and Capitalism; the Growing Imperialist Crisis; Cuban Revolution and Marxist Leadership Today. Speaker: Raúl González, National Committee Socialist Workers Party. Translation to Spanish. Sun., Feb. 12, 7 p.m. 5534 Troost. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (816) 444-7880.

St. Louis

Socialist Workers Campaign Rally. Speakers: Tom Leonard, candidate for mayor; James Garrison, candidate for alderman, 17th Ward; Pat Barker, Young Socialist Alliance. Sat., Feb. 11, 7 p.m. 4907 Martin Luther King Dr. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Socialist Workers 1989 Campaign and YSA. For more information call (314) 361-0250.

NEBRASKA

Omaha

Celebrate Black History Month. Speaker: Nan Bailey, Socialist Workers Party candidate for Des Moines City Council. Video showing of Malcolm X speech. Translation to Spanish. Sat., Feb. 18, 7:30 p.m. 140 S 40th St. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (402) 553-0245.

NEW JERSEY

Newark

The Miami Rebellion: What's Behind It? Speaker: Pat Wright, Socialist Workers Party, long-time Black activist, resident of Miami. Translation to Spanish and French. Sat., Feb. 11, 7:30 p.m. 141 Halsey St., 2nd floor. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (201) 643-3341.

NEW YORK

Manhattan

Solidarity with the Palestinian Uprising! Speakers: Jeff Perry, member Mailhandlers Local 300; Mike Shur, Socialist Workers Party. Translation to Spanish. Sat., Feb. 11, 7:30 p.m. 79 Leonard St. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum/Foro Perspectiva Mundial. For more information call (212) 226-8445.

Malcolm X: Internationalist Leader for Working People. Speaker: James Harris, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor. Translation to Spanish. Fri., Feb. 17, 7:30 p.m. 79 Leonard St. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum/Foro Perspectiva Mundial. For more information call (212) 226-8445.

Benefit for the Center for Cuban Studies. Cuban videos, posters, food, and drink. Sun., Feb. 19, 2 - 7 p.m. 209 W 97 St., Apt. 7C. Donation: \$5. For more information call (212) 242-0559.

NORTH CAROLINA

Greensboro

The Legacy of Malcolm X. Sun., Feb. 19, 7 p.m. 2219 E Market. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (919) 272-5996.

OREGON

Portland

Abortion: A Woman's Right to Choose! Speakers: Genna Southworth, organizer Oregon National Abortion Rights Action League; Peggy Norman, Northwest regional representative, National Board, National Organization for Women; Leila Whittemore, Feminist Women's Health Center; representative Socialist Workers Party. Sat., Feb. 11, 7:30 p.m. 2730 NE Union. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (503) 287-7416.

Free Mark Curtis! Speaker: Kate Kaku, Mark Curtis Defense Committee, wife of Mark Curtis. Sat., Feb. 25, 7 p.m. Reception to follow. Peace House, 2116 NE 18th. Sponsor: Supporters of the Mark Curtis Defense Committee. For more information call (503) 287-9018.

TEXAS

Houston

Celebrate Cuba's 30 Years of Building Socialism. Classes and forum, Sat., Feb. 11 and Sun., Feb. 12. "Cuba's Role in Angola," class, Sat., 3:30 p.m. Forum with Prof. Zuberi Mwamba; Stephen Gittens, member Maurice Bishop Patriotic Movement; and Joanne Kuniansky, Socialist Workers Party, member Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers Local 4-227, Sat., 7:30 p.m. "Che Guevara's 'Socialism and Man,'" class Sun., 11 a.m. 4806 Alameda. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum/Foro Perspectiva Mundial. For more information call (713) 522-8054.

formation call (713) 522-8054.

El Salvador: Prospects for Peace. Speakers: J.J. Garcia, national organizer of Veterans Convoy for Children of El Salvador; James Khyne, Young Socialist Alliance, others. Translation to Spanish. Sat., Feb. 18, 7:30 p.m. 4806 Alameda. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum/Foro Perspectiva Mundial. For more information call (713) 522-8054.

WEST VIRGINIA

Charleston

The Fight Against Racism Today. Speakers: Rev. Clayton Howard, president Black Independent Concerned Citizens of Mingo County; Andrew Pulley, National Committee Socialist Workers Party. Sat., Feb. 11, 7 p.m. 116 McFarland St. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (304) 345-3040.

Morgantown

International Solidarity vs. Protectionism. Video showing of *We Are Driven*, documentary about Japanese auto workers. Speaker: Joe Kleidon, Socialist Workers Party, member International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union Local 445. Sat., Feb. 11, 7:30 p.m. 221 Pleasant St. Donation: \$2. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (304) 296-0055.

WISCONSIN

Milwaukee

An Action Program to Confront the Coming Economic Crisis. Speaker: Omari Musa, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of Chicago; Pat Grogan, 1988 SWP candidate for Senate from Wisconsin. Translation to Spanish. Sat., Feb. 18, 7:30 p.m. 4707 W Lisbon Ave. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (414) 445-2076.

AUSTRALIA

Sydney

Cuba: 30 Years of Revolution. A panel discussion with speakers who have just returned from Cuba. Translation to Spanish. Fri., Feb. 17, 7:30 p.m. 181 Glebe Point Rd., Glebe. Sponsor: Militant Labor Forum. For more information call (02) 660-1673.

CANADA

Montréal

Celebrate Black History Month: Showing of Malcolm X Speaks. Video presentation. Translation to French and Spanish. Sat., Feb. 18, 7:30 p.m. 4274 Papineau, Suite 302. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Forum Lutte ouvrière. For more information call (514) 524-7992.

Toronto

The Civil Rights Movement: Lessons for Today. Speaker: Heidi Rose, Revolutionary Workers League, garment worker. Sat., Feb. 18, 7:30 p.m. 410 Adelaide St. W, Suite 400. Donation: \$3. Sponsor: Socialist Voice Forum. For more information call (416) 861-1399.

SWEDEN

Stockholm

Justice for Mark Curtis! Speakers: Kate Kaku, Mark Curtis Defense Committee, wife of Mark Curtis, framed up unionist and political activist from Des Moines, Iowa; Stellan Hermansson, chairman Communist Youth (KU); Gerd Måbrink. Sat., Feb. 18, 15.00. Folkets Hus, room 307 (entry at Wallingatan 21). Sponsor: Mark Curtis Defense Committee in Sweden.

Glebe. Postal address: P.O. Box 153 Glebe, Sydney NSW 2037. Tel: 02-660 1673.

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London: 47 The Cut, SE1 8LL. Tel: 01-401 2293.

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Sit back and enjoy your flight — "SEATTLE — Several hundred Boeing Co. jetliners built with glue that's breaking down will be pulled out of the sky temporarily for modifications, a Boeing executive said." — News item.



Harry Ring

But tempered with mercy — Delaware proposes to reinstate the

whipping post. A bill in the state legislature provides for flogging those convicted of drug dealing, with up to 40 lashes "well laid on." Judges, however, would have the discretion to suspend or reduce the number of lashes for women, children, and first offenders.

Mum's the word — A government-sponsored Official Secrets Bill before the British Parliament would bar former security agents from ever discussing their work, even if the security agency itself had no objection. Not, of course, because there's anything to hide.

An apple a day ... — The Environmental Protection Agency has known since the mid-1970's

that Alar, a chemical used to improve the shelf life and appearance of red apples, causes cancer. (Washing or peeling doesn't help. It permeates the apple.) The EPA now says it plans to bar Alar — but not for another 18 months, minimum. It says tests haven't proven "conclusively" that the danger is imminent.

Note to Minnesota Fats — A catalog from Birks in Canada offers the usual — \$1,000 Gucci watches, etc. But they also have some neat trinkets. Like, a silver-plated cube for chalking your cue stick, \$25. Or, a sterling, retractable toothpick, \$70.

Taking care of business —

When Britain's electric power industry is privatized, the government is reportedly prepared to write a "blank check" to compensate investors for any unforeseen increase in the cost of producing nuclear power. This would cover such items as increases in the cost of decommissioning aged reactors or additional safety regulations.

Biased? White male MDs? — A study found white men are twice as likely to get kidney transplants than Black men or women, and a third more likely than white women. That's even though the government picks up most transplant bills. Some of the researchers suspect unconscious doctor bias.

They're barred from heaven? — "Where will it all end? What happens when someone says they want a vicar to do prayers at a pet's funeral?" — A British reverend objecting to plans by a town council to augment revenues by permitting the burial of pet dogs, cats, and horses in the municipal cemetery.

Aid for the truly greedy — What with a king-sized presidential pension, multimillion-dollar memoir contracts, etc., the Reagans are planning to scrape up a little extra with speaking engagements. Ron is asking \$50,000 per rap, but Nancy will do her number for \$30,000.

El Salvador rebels call for 60-day cease-fire

Continued from front page
the government's human rights record as "uneven."

U.S. Sen. Tom Harkin (D-Iowa) is reportedly preparing a bill that would require placing 50 percent of U.S. military aid to El Salvador in escrow pending a presidential report on negotiations with the guerrillas, death-squad killings, and human rights violations in general.

After Quayle's visit, the Salvadoran government agreed to reopen the case of the army's killing in September of 10 peasants. The shootings followed the roundup of the residents of a small village accused of collaborating with the rebels. An earlier investigation by the military had exonerated the killers.

In a program broadcast on all television and radio stations February 5, the Salvadoran government charged that gunman Héctor Antonio Regalado carried out the 1980 murder of archbishop Oscar Romero. The government stated that Regalado acted under orders from ARENA leader Roberto D'Aubuisson.

At the end of December, the supreme court of El Salvador had legally closed the investigation into Romero's murder.

No army officer or member of a rightist death squad has been convicted and punished for any of the many hundreds of political killings in the past eight years, even though many of the killers are known. More than 70,000 people have died in the counterinsurgency war waged by the government.

One-third of the population has been displaced by the war, and many have been forced to leave the country.

The government's failure to win the conflict has thrown it into a deepening crisis. The war has also become a social and economic disaster for the working people of El Salvador.

Last year's coffee crop in El Salvador was down 50 percent from the previous year, and the lowest in more than a decade. Coffee sales have accounted for more than half the money that the Salvadoran government contributes to the national budget. Washington provides the rest.

Half of the labor force is unemployed or underemployed. Rates of infant mortality have risen, fewer people have access to drinkable water, and most rural clinics have no medicine.

In a column in the February 7 *New York Times*, Rubén Zamora, secretary general of the Democratic Convergence bloc, called

on the Salvadoran government to implement the FMLN proposal.

He supported the FMLN call for the election postponement — one of the pretexts for opposing the plan cited by Duarte and ARENA leaders. "Guarantees of a clean election demanded by the FMLN — guarantees that have not been questioned by any party — could not possibly be in place by March 19," he noted.

"If the FMLN is to recognize the results of the voting, its members and sympathizers ought to have the right to vote," Zamora wrote. "If the election were to be held in March, this would be impossible: the electoral registry is already closed."

He dismissed the claim that the proposal to postpone the elections would violate the constitution because it would leave El Salvador without a government when Duarte's term expires June 1.

The Salvadoran constitution, he pointed out, "calls for the designation of an interim leader if the presidency should be vacated because of death, resignation, removal, or another reason."

Zamora rejected the criticisms of the plan as "either excuses to avoid serious

peace efforts or partisan efforts to rule at all costs."

"The central point is not constitutional," Zamora explained, "but the political will to make peace. The proposal puts all Salvadoran political forces to a test. Are we for peace or for the continuation and intensification of the war?"



Rubén Zamora

Southwest antiwar conference

BY HARVEY McARTHUR

BERNALILLO, N.M. — A Southwest regional Central America activists conference drew 250 participants here January 21 and 22. The meeting urged support for the March 18-20 protests against U.S. intervention in El Salvador called by the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES), the Nicaragua Network, and other solidarity and antiwar organizations. It also established a quarterly newsletter to help groups in the Southwest keep in contact and coordinate their activities.

Three dozen peace, solidarity, and human rights groups in Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, and Colorado sent representatives to the meeting. Most participants were veteran activists and many had spent time in Nicaragua, El Salvador, or Guatemala. A few students and a handful of union members were also present.

The conference opened with keynote talks by Francisco Lopez of the Committee of Salvadoran Refugees in Houston; Nelson Valdez, director of the Latin America Data Base information service; and Jack O'Dell, acting executive director of the National Rainbow Coalition.

Lopez urged the conference to back March 18-20 demonstrations.

Valdez predicted that the George Bush administration would use "political-ideological struggle" against the Sandinista revolution and try to take advantage of the economic crisis facing Nicaragua "to split the revolution's ranks." U.S. solidarity groups should respond by calling for more economic aid for Nicaragua, he concluded.

O'Dell urged peace activists to take advantage of the Palestinian uprising in the Middle East, the Cuban-Angolan defeat of the South African army in Angola last March, and "the growing role and moral authority of the United Nations."

Most of the Bernalillo conference was devoted to a series of workshops on such topics as the political and economic situation facing the Sandinista revolution; organizing brigades and sister-city projects with Nicaragua; dealing with racism in solidarity groups; and voter registration and lobbying campaigns.

Questions that provoked some debate included whether the contra war was over, whether the Sandinista government should rely on the market economy or carry out further nationalizations, whether the Bush administration was likely to invade El Salvador, and if the U.S. government had a role in political dialogue and negotiations between Salvadoran parties.

The recommendations of the workshops reported to the conference included urging joint actions in local areas around March 18-20, and around April 28, the second anniversary of the murder of Benjamin Linder by contras in Nicaragua.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Celebrate the 30th Anniversary of the Cuban Revolution: Normalize U.S.-Cuban Relations.

Speakers: C.P. Joyce, U.S.-Cuban Women's Exchange, Venceremos Brigade; Paris Lewis, president Progressive Student Movement; Julia Swagg, coordinator U.S.-Cuba Dialogue Project and Institute for Policy Studies; Nkonge Toure, co-coordinator, National Black Women's Health Project; Mary-Alice Waters, editor *New Internationalist*, leader of Socialist Workers Party. Sat., Feb. 11, 7 p.m. Howard University, Blackburn Center, Forum Room. Sponsors: Progressive Student Movement, Pathfinder Press, Socialist Workers Party. For more information call (202) 797-7699.

—10 AND 25 YEARS AGO—

THE MILITANT

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE
Feb. 16, 1979

TEHRAN, Iran. — On February 5 Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini appointed Mehdi Bazargan as prime minister of his provisional government counterposed to the regime appointed by the shah.

Khomeini said that once his provisional government was fully appointed it would call for the election of a constituent assembly, which would write a new constitution for Iran, establishing an Islamic republic. The constitution would then be put up for a vote.

The appointment of Bazargan occurred against the backdrop of continued mobilizations against the Shahpur Bakhtiar government. In these mobilizations, the demands of workers, oppressed nationalities, and women have increasingly moved to the forefront.

On February 1 the Bakhtiar regime was finally forced to allow Khomeini to return to this country after 15 years in exile. Following his arrival, the government announced that the army would allow demonstrations to proceed peacefully over the next few days.

The day before Khomeini's plane touched down in Tehran, the army staged a show of force, parading several miles of tanks and truckloads of soldiers through the city.

But while the front columns shouted, "Long live the shah," many in the rear divisions — the lowest-ranking soldiers — chanted slogans in solidarity with the people.

The next morning, Khomeini arrived. As soon as the news came over the radio, cars began honking. Everyone turned on their headlights.

Thousands of people ran down the streets to Shah Reza Avenue, where Khomeini's procession would pass by.

Along Shah Reza, when the entourage appeared, thousands of fists shot into the air. Chants of "Khomeini welcome" and "Khomeini we are your soldiers, we are awaiting your orders" echoed up and down the street.

One million came to the rally for Khomeini at the Behesht-e-Zahra cemetery.

Since his arrival, Khomeini has continued to call the present government and monarchy illegal. He has demanded Bakhtiar's resignation, but Bakhtiar has refused.

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After almost four weeks of haggling, the Organization of American States has accomplished nothing in the Panama-U.S. dispute.

Panama is demanding a renegotiation of the 1903 treaty, which leased the Canal Zone to the U.S. "in perpetuity." The United States refuses to discuss the basic question and tries to lose it in the labyrinthine channels of OAS grievance procedures.

[On January 9, 27 Panamanians were killed by U.S. troops while protesting a U.S. failure to honor an agreement whereby the Panamanian flag would fly alongside that of the United States in the Canal Zone.]

Shortly after the outbreak of violence, Panama broke relations with the United States. The Inter-American Peace Committee then met to "work out" the differences which had arisen in the hemispheric "family." Almost from the start Panama insisted that no fruitful results could be expected unless the United States would agree to discuss a revision of the 1903 Canal treaty.

Full faith and credit, but . . .

The plan announced by President George Bush February 6 for a massive bailout and reorganization of U.S. savings and loan associations — known as S&Ls or thrifts — has two aims. The first is to minimize and contain the impact of hundreds of bankrupt S&Ls on the U.S. banking system as a whole, especially the federal deposit insurance setup.

The second goal is to reassure workers, farmers, and small business people that all is well — the banking system is sound, federal deposit insurance can be made adequate, and savings are safe. "Every insured deposit will be backed by the full faith and credit of the United States of America," Bush stressed in his news conference announcing the proposal, "which means that it will be absolutely protected."

The S&L plan, which now goes to Congress, has several components, including the sale of \$50 billion in high-interest government bonds to cover more bailouts; the government takeover and reorganization of 350 insolvent thrifts; and increasing insurance premiums paid by S&Ls and commercial banks to build up the federal deposit insurance funds, which are supposed to cover individual deposits up to \$100,000.

Other steps aim to bring the agencies regulating and insuring S&Ls under control of the Treasury Department and Federal Deposit Insurance Corp. (FDIC), which insures commercial banks.

The day after the announcement, the White House released a new estimate on the sum needed to bail out S&Ls over the next 10 years — \$126.6 billion, the highest figure yet. It is estimated that \$40 billion of this will have to come from tax revenues — that is, out of the pockets of working people — in addition to the \$40 billion that already has. The rest, in theory, will come from sale of bonds and increased fees on banks. But this won't lessen the burden on working people either. Interest payments to the capitalist bondholders will eventually come from

tax revenues. And the banks can pass on their costs to depositors.

The new plan comes after months of growing pressure on the government to come up with a solution to the crisis of the S&L system. At the end of last year, more than 500 S&Ls were insolvent, another 500 were effectively so, and many of the remaining 2,000 were shaky. Losses were mounting at \$1 billion per month.

The government bailout began last year, when the Federal Home Loan Bank Board (FHLBB) — the agency that regulates S&Ls and oversees the Federal Savings and Loan Insurance Corp. that insures them — merged and sold 222 insolvent thrifts. The FHLBB used nearly \$40 billion of taxpayers' money to sweeten the pot for the investors, corporate executives, and pension fund managers who took over the bankrupt S&Ls, helping assure that profits would be made out of the reorganized thrifts.

Some capitalist financial analysts are already casting doubt on the ability of Bush's plan to do what it promises. More insolvencies are probable, and the amount of the government bailout is likely to rise — at best.

The estimates on the size of the S&L bailout needed "are based on a reasonably stable economy," said Comptroller General Charles Bowsher. "If you get a rise in interest rates and then a recession, that will have a big effect."

Bush's plan does nothing, and can do nothing, to change the fact that the federal deposit insurance, even if reinforced, is utterly inadequate to deal with the massive losses that would result from widespread bank failures or the collapse of the banking system as a whole. It's only meant for "normal" times.

But all signs are that normal times aren't what's ahead, as the crisis of the world capitalist system deepens. In the next serious economic downturn, workers and farmers by the millions stand to lose their savings — along with their jobs, farms, and homes — Bush's rescue plan notwithstanding.

U.S. troops, nukes out of Korea!

The governments of the United States and South Korea have continued to resist recent initiatives by the North Korean regime to establish talks with Seoul and Washington to discuss ways to bring peace and reunification to the Korean peninsula.

On Nov. 7, 1988, the North Korean government proposed "four principles" to "guarantee peace" in Korea. They are:

- Reunification of the country. Korea has been divided since the end of World War II as a result of U.S. military occupation. North and South Korea are still technically at war, and have no official relations.
- Withdrawal of foreign armed forces. There are 43,000 U.S. troops stationed in South Korea today.
- Arms reduction in the north and south. Washington maintains a nuclear arsenal in South Korea.
- Dialogue "among the parties responsible for the aggravation of tensions." In January, North Korean Premier Yon Hyong Muk proposed to his counterpart in the south to hold high-level political and military talks in Pyongyang and Seoul alternately, the capital cities of the north and south.

Backing up the four principles were detailed proposals for implementing them.

On January 24, the State Department informed North Korean officials that Washington would not hold discussions with Pyongyang at this time.

The South Korean government has been forced, as a result of popular sentiment and protests in that country, to participate in several rounds of bilateral meetings whose purpose is to prepare the way for higher-level negotiations between the North and South Korean governments.

A key obstacle to moving forward has been the decision of Washington and Seoul to go ahead with plans to carry out the annual "Team Spirit" joint military exercises. According to a report on a South Korean radio station, the provocative maneuvers, which began January 27, are scheduled to continue until the end of April. They will mobilize more than 200,000 soldiers, including 60,000 from the U.S. armed forces.

These joint military exercises, which are directed against North Korea, should cease. All U.S. troops and weapons should be withdrawn from the Korean peninsula now. Every economic, political, and diplomatic sanction that Washington has imposed on North Korea should be lifted, and relations between the two countries normalized.

End U.S. role in Afghan war

Far from ending as the last Soviet troops in Afghanistan head home, the U.S. military intervention in that country continues at a high level.

U.S. personnel are directly involved in conveying arms and other aid to rightist-led insurgents as they surround Kabul and other cities.

The actions of both the White House and Congress, as they have been throughout the decade-long war, are fueling the devastation and horrible human toll of this bloody conflict and sabotaging the possibility of a peaceful settlement. The U.S.-sponsorship of the war has contributed to ravaging the Afghan countryside. It now confronts the besieged population of the government-controlled cities with growing food shortages that are leading to hunger and malnutrition.

After the U.S. government has poured hundreds of millions of dollars and tons of weapons into Afghanistan over the last 10 years to back reactionary landlord forces, President George Bush had the arrogance to offer Washington's services as a "catalyst" for bringing "stability" to Afghanistan. The National Security Council, he an-

nounced, will begin reviewing U.S. government policy options on February 10.

Washington has no right to any voice in the government of Afghanistan. The U.S. rulers had no right to seek to topple the current government. And should the Kabul government fall, the Bush administration and the Democratic-controlled Congress have no right to play any part in choosing its successor.

The current U.S. participation in the siege of government-held cities is an outrageous violation of the Afghan peoples' right to self-determination.

All U.S. aid to the Afghan insurgents should be halted now. The U.S. program of military assistance to Pakistan, which has served as a base for Washington's violations of Afghanistan's sovereignty, should also be canceled.

Washington instead should throw resources into the efforts by the United Nations and others to provide food, medical care, and other necessities to the people of the war-torn cities and countryside of Afghanistan.

Is the USSR subsidizing Cuba?

BY DOUG JENNESS

Pundits and politicians in the capitalist world keep harping on the theme that the Cuban economy is massively "subsidized" by the Soviet Union to the tune of \$4 to \$5 billion a year.

Many seem to think that if Cubans don't pull themselves up by their own bootstraps, it's proof that socialism has failed. Some, who concede that Cuba has made

LEARNING ABOUT SOCIALISM

significant economic and social achievements in the last 30 years, say, "Yes . . . but without a massive handout from the Soviet Union, it would not have been possible."

There is no question that after Washington broke off trade relations with Cuba nearly 30 years ago and imposed an economic blockade, trade with, and loans from, the Soviet Union and East European countries have been decisive for Cuba's economic development. But trade and credit aren't the same as a handout.

The nub of the "subsidization" notion is that the USSR buys the big bulk of Cuba's sugar exports, as well as nickel and other products, at "inflated prices" rather than at prevailing world market prices. And it sells Cuba oil and other things it needs at prices lower than those on the world capitalist market.

To call this subsidization, however, assumes that world market prices are fair.

But that's not the case. They are unequal and exploitive for the semicolonial countries, where the average productivity of labor power is lower than in industrially developed countries. That is, a commodity — such as sugar, for example — produced with an hour's labor time in an industrialized country is usually sold on the world market for the same price as a similar one embodying many more hours of labor in a semicolonial country. The result of this inequality for the capitalists in the imperialist countries is a constant, hidden transfer of value to them.

Ernesto Che Guevara, a leader of the Cuban revolution, cogently explained this to a conference on Afro-Asian solidarity in Algeria in 1965. "There should not be any more talk about developing mutually beneficial trade based on prices forced on the backward countries by the law of value and the international relations of unequal exchange that result from the law of value."

"How can it be 'mutually beneficial,'" he asked, "to sell at world market prices the raw materials that cost the underdeveloped countries immeasurable sweat and suffering, and to buy at world market prices the machinery produced in today's big automated factories?"

And what if the Soviet Union, East Germany, or any other industrialized country where capitalism has been overturned trades at world market prices with Third World countries? They, in a certain way, would become "accomplices of imperial exploitation," Guevara said.

If the Soviet Union, then, were to buy sugar at the world market price from Cuba, a country still bearing the backwardness of its semicolonial heritage, it would profit off the arrangement.

The two countries, however, have attempted to establish more equal and fair relations by pegging the price of sugar exports to the Soviet Union to the prices of Cuba's imports, especially oil from that country. "We have established the kind of just and fair trading relations," Cuban President Fidel Castro said in a 1987 interview with an Italian newspaper, "that should exist between developed and underdeveloped countries — something that we propose to all the world's underdeveloped countries in their relations with the developed capitalist world."

Castro noted that the world market price for sugar is actually a myth. Much of the sugar sold in the United States and Western Europe is sold well above the official market price. In the United States, sugar is sold at government-set prices, and the only imports allowed in at these higher prices is based on restrictive quotas.

The European Economic Community also subsidizes sugar production, jacking up the price in Europe and dumping the remainder on the world market dirt cheap. The world market price then, is actually depressed, Castro said, by these imperialist practices. And yet the capitalists continue to accuse Cuba of being subsidized because it sells its sugar at a price higher than the "erroneous, arbitrary, and manipulated calculation" called the world market price.

The capitalists figure that if the Soviet Union isn't draining Cuba of some of its wealth, that's a subsidy.

With more fair trade relations, coupled with the low-interest, long-term loans it gets from the Soviet Union, Cuba continues to make remarkable social gains.

There is no country in Latin America or the Caribbean that can hold a candle to what Cuba has accomplished in this area despite the billions of dollars in loans and direct grants they have received from the imperialist countries. In fact, the investments and loans from bankers in New York, London, and other financial centers have been a major vehicle for robbing the peoples in the semicolonial countries.

Anti-apartheid meeting

Sales of Pathfinder literature went well at the December 9-10 conference of the European Campaign Against South African Aggression on Mozambique and Angola held in Bonn, West Germany. More than \$300 worth of literature was sold.

The conference was attended by more than 400 anti-apartheid activists from 15 European countries. Among them were delegations from the governing parties in Angola and Mozambique; and from the South West Africa People's Organisation of Namibia and the African National Congress of South Africa.

Particular interest was shown in *Thomas Sankara Speaks*, a recent Pathfinder book that brings together for the first time in English the writings, speeches, and interviews of the central leader of the popular, democratic revolution in the West African country of Burkina Faso.

All seven copies of the book that were available were sold. Many more of the conference participants asked how they could obtain the book. Other sales included nine copies of the Marxist journal *New Internationalist*, three of the Spanish-language weekly *Perspectiva Mundial*, 19 copies of the *Militant*, and one *Militant* subscription.

Martin Hill
Sheffield, England

Sharing

I love your paper. I want to share it with a friend. Here is \$4 for 12 weeks for a new reader. I'll surely be renewing for a year when my own 12 weeks' introductory subscription is up!

Will Wilkin
Ansonia, Connecticut

Textile, denim, cotton

I am writing to call your attention to several errors in the plant-gate sales column in the January 27 issue of the *Militant* that were introduced in the editing of the article.

The column states that 4,000

textile workers have lost their jobs in the Southeast since April 1988 as a result of the restructuring of the industry. Our draft cited a statistic of 4,000 denim workers.

Textile workers are involved in a number of different manufacturing processes: fiber production, spinning, weaving of different types of fabric (skirting, denim, sheeting, towels, etc.), carpet manufacturing, and so on. Denim workers are a subset of textile workers in general. We don't have any figures on job loss among all textile workers for the same period.

The article also states that Cone Mills Corp. is "the largest cotton, denim, and corduroy manufacturer in the world." Cotton, when used as a noun, refers to the fiber, which is an agricultural product and not produced in mills. Cotton mills refer to the plants where the fiber is processed. Cone is the largest manufacturer of cotton denim and corduroy as opposed to denim and corduroy made of synthetic fibers or cotton blended with synthetic fibers. The company is nowhere near the largest producer of cotton fabric in general.

The article also states that weavers and creelers have been "stretched out along the line." The phrase "stretched out" is commonly used in the industry to refer to workers being made responsible for greater and greater numbers of machines. Adding "along the line" to the phrase doesn't make much sense in the context of textile mill production, which is not really an assembly-line operation, and sounds odd to people familiar with the industry.

Yvonne Hayes
Greensboro, North Carolina

Action Program

I'm writing with the intent of receiving the booklet, *Action Program to Confront the Coming Economic Crisis*. I've studied the underdevelopment and colonization of the indigenous peoples of Africa, Asia, and Latin America. I've analyzed and appreciated Fidel Castro's logical and just solu-



Marlette

tion in his proposal for the indigenous peoples to unconditionally repudiate the debt.

A prisoner
Comstock, New York

Contracting out

In the February 3 *Militant* there is a letter from Kim O'Brien about the recent contract settlement at the Pratt & Whitney plant in Hartford, Connecticut. In it he refers to a letter I wrote in the January 13 issue that says companies such as Pratt and General Electric have been imposing layoffs due to the "farmout" — subcontracting work to smaller, mostly nonunion shops.

Where I work — the GE Riverworks plant in Lynn, Massachusetts — 4,000 out of 8,500 workers have been laid off in the last two years while 60 percent of the work has been farmed out.

This farmout weakens the bargaining power of the unionized shops because the products they make can continue to be produced elsewhere if they go on strike. In fact, the Defense Department requires military contractors such as

GE and Pratt to subcontract work out for that reason.

However, I agree with O'Brien that the answer to subcontracting is not to fight for "our" jobs as against nonunion workers. We agree that nonunion workers must be organized.

That is not always so easy, though, given the current state of our unions. The first major GE plant to be unionized in 15 years was recently organized in Murfreesboro, Tennessee. But the union then negotiated a \$1 an hour wage cut.

The solution, I think, lies in developing a different strategy for our unions, one that doesn't identify with "our" companies or "our country" against workers in other shops or other countries, but recognizes that our interests are the same as theirs. The labor movement should fight for a shorter workweek to create jobs in the face of massive layoffs. It would fight to defend the gains of affirmative action (which is being wiped out at places such as GE) to prevent divisions among us that the companies promote through race and sex discrimination.

We should link up with our brothers and sisters in other countries against the far more brutal exploitation they face because of the debt owed to international banks and direct exploitation at the hands of companies such as GE.

Maybe then the labor movement will have the power and attractiveness to organize the 83 percent of workers in this country not in unions.

Russell Davis
Lynn, Massachusetts

Abortion rights I

A spirited rally of abortion rights defenders countered an anti-abortion action at a family planning clinic here in Phoenix. Abortion foes blocked the door of the facility, and about 180 of them were arrested.

The January 21 rally drew more than 200 women and men. Many were young women from Arizona State University. One ASU student, Rachel, told me, "I think all women, no not just women, men too, need to get out for support. I'm afraid we'll lose our rights without even knowing it."

The keynote speaker at the rally was Mary Rothchild, an ASU professor who helped win legal abortion in Washington State through her role in organizing a statewide referendum there in 1970. The speaker from the National Organization for Women stressed the importance of participating in the April 9 national demonstration in Washington, D.C., in defense of abortion rights.

Barbara Greenway
Phoenix, Arizona

Abortion rights II

Some 500 people gathered in Seattle on the steps of the federal courthouse to celebrate the 16th anniversary of the *Roe v. Wade* decision legalizing abortion. Speakers at the January 22 candlelight vigil included state legislators, representatives from the National Abortion Rights Action League and the Rainbow Coalition, and a Vietnamese woman representing Third World women. They addressed recent attacks on area women's clinics, including by Operation Rescue, as well as a new campaign in Washington State to force underage women to get parental consent for abortion.

Two dozen "right to life" demonstrators pressed close to the vigil from the sidewalk, but moved across the street after a handful of vigil participants moved among them with prochoice signs and chants.

Janny Becker
Seattle, Washington

Radioactive waste

Speakers at a recent Militant Labor Forum in Detroit explained that there is no way to safely dispose of radioactive waste.

Richard Wunche talked about the experience of Hillsdale, Michigan, residents who mobilized a 3,000-strong protest to oppose a proposed waste dump site in their community.

Mike Keegan of the Coalition for a Nuclear-Free Great Lakes and Mary Sinclair, co-chair of the Don't Waste Michigan group, said several environmental groups will sponsor a rally February 7 at the State Capitol in Lansing to protest a proposed Michigan dump site that would receive radioactive waste from seven states.

Also speaking were Mark Friedman of the Socialist Workers Party and activists in the Hillsdale Organization for Preservation of the Environment, and the Evergreen Alliance.

Lisa Potash
Detroit, Michigan

The Militant special prisoner fund makes it possible to send reduced-rate subscriptions to prisoners who can't pay for them. To help this important cause, send your contribution to: Militant Prisoner Subscription Fund, 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014.

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of general interest to our readers. Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.

Correction in 'Prospects for communism' article

In the article "Prospects for communism today," by Doug Jenness, published in the February 10 issue, several paragraphs were printed out of order. We are reprinting the entire concluding section of the article where the jumbled paragraphs occurred.

The *New York Times* said that for its series, it "sought to interview Cuban Communists both individually and through Government officials, but none of the interview requests were granted."

The paper didn't report what, if any, reasons were given for this decision. But whatever they were, it's clear that the entire framework of the *Times* series and interviews — that a crisis for "communism" exists — is very different than the stand of the Communist Party of Cuba.

In response to the imperialist campaign applauding capitalism and portraying socialism as a failure, Castro has, in a series of recent speeches, repeatedly defended the communist perspective.

"The fact that our country, blockaded by the empire for 30 years," he told a December 5 rally in Havana, "has reached the social and material successes that Cuba has reached is thanks to Marxism-Leninism and thanks to

socialism!"

A month later, Castro explained to a rally of youth celebrating the 30th anniversary of the Cuban revolution that Cuba "was perfecting socialism without resorting to the mechanisms and style of capitalism, without being capitalistic."

He cited the significant achievements of volunteer labor in Cuba. "The principles that are being followed by those labor forces have nothing to do with capitalist methods or with capitalist organizational methods...."

"These contingents proved what man can do and what man is able to do when there is faith and trust in men and when we do not see men as animals, as animals that do things only if you place a carrot in front of him."

"We can say," Castro continued, "that our thousands of mass work groups are not working and doing what they are doing because we are placing a carrot in front of them."

In his December 5 speech Castro affirmed, "Socialism is and always will be hope, the only hope, the only road for the peoples, the oppressed, the exploited, the plundered to follow; socialism is the only alternative! And today, when our enemies want to question it, we must defend it more than ever."

The Cuban leader stressed the

role of the Cuban revolution in setting an example and helping to lead the fight for socialism internationally. "Whereas this has always been our duty, it is our duty more than ever today, because today our country has great international responsibilities, great responsibilities! Not because it is a powerful country, but because it is a great example of revolutionary spirit, of internationalism, of heroism, of bravery in its ability to face up to the empire, in its audacity to build socialism right next to the empire."

Castro said that what Cubans do inside Cuba to advance toward socialism "is not only good for our country but for the world. It is good for our cause, and, above all it is good for the peoples of Latin America and the peoples of the Third World. It is good for all peoples, even the peoples of the socialist countries, and it is also good for the workers of capitalist countries."

While the capitalists attempt to pump as much propaganda as they can out of the "crisis of communism," their euphoria will be short-lived. Their own system is about to be hit by an earthquake of its own making, and the communist forces that will lead working people forward are today pointing the way.

New stage in Eastern Airlines contract fight

Union members discuss strike possibility as 'cooling off' period begins

BY ERNEST MAILHOT

NEW YORK — After 16 months of contract negotiations, the International Association of Machinists (IAM) and Eastern Airlines have been released from government-sponsored talks. This action was taken February 2 by the National Mediation Board.

A 30-day "cooling off" period between the company and union has now been set in motion. When that ends March 4, the company can legally impose its final contract offer on the IAM. The union is also free at that point to strike.

During the long, drawn-out talks, Eastern management repeatedly demonstrated that it was not interested in negotiating seriously with the IAM, the largest union in the airline. The Machinists union represents some 9,000 mechanics, ramp workers, cleaners, stock clerks, and fuelers.

Eastern's owners, led by Frank Lorenzo of parent company Texas Air Corp., have not backed off from their original demands to cut wages of union members up to 56 percent, institute sweeping changes in work rules, and contract out any work the company deems necessary. Their proposals also include lower starting pay and introduction of part-time status for new hires. Union representatives, such as chief stewards, would no longer be paid by the company.

Even before the IAM contract expired in December 1987, Eastern began harassing the union and violating the agreement. Since negotiations started, thousands of IAM members have been disciplined and given days off, pressured to take drug and alcohol tests, and forced to work overtime and with understaffed crews. Several hundred union members have been fired, including some officials. The president of Local Lodge 1018 at New York's LaGuardia Airport was fired in January. More than 7,000 workers, both union and nonunion have been laid off.

One reason Eastern has continued to sell off assets, including the profitable Northeast Shuttle, is to build up a strike-breaking fund in the event of a walkout. The company has paid Continental Airlines, also owned by Texas Air, \$22.5 million for strike preparation services.

Eastern's bosses have already brought in extra "security" personnel and begun training nonunion workers, such as reservation clerks, to do jobs performed by IAM members. On February 5 Butler Aviation, an airline service company, placed an ad for mechanics in *New York Newsday*. The ad said, "Your assignment may require you to perform the services of, or replace, employees of a company experiencing a strike or other labor dispute."

The IAM has called for strike authorization votes at all Eastern locals. The first was held February 6 at Local Lodge 1018 at LaGuardia. While results are not yet in, the turnout by union members was high, and the strike call is expected to pass overwhelmingly.

Union members from Miami and Washington, D.C., also report that many workers are enthusiastic about the union leadership's call to prepare for a strike.

More than 100 union members came to a late afternoon meeting at LaGuardia February 6 and discussed how to prepare for a strike, including the importance of contacting unions at other airlines for support.

Several questions were asked about the letter from IAM International President William Winpisinger to the National Mediation Board, in which he raised the possibility of "secondary activity against a number of major carriers" if the IAM strikes Eastern.

A member of the IAM negotiating team reported no specific strike preparations to the LaGuardia meeting. He did explain, however, that the government may intervene to extend the "cooling off" period by



Mechanic checks engine at Eastern's maintenance base in Miami. Union members have faced stepped-up harassment during 16 months of government-regulated negotiations.

as much as 60 days, or even impose a contract settlement on the union. A government-imposed settlement would not be a good one for the union, he said, but it would be better than the one the company is after.

Many union members are convinced that a strike is needed to hold the line against the company's demands for givebacks. One LaGuardia ramp service worker ex-

plained how he answered the question of whether or not he could afford to strike. "We can't afford not to go on strike," he replied. "If we give in now, it's only the beginning."

Eastern pilots in the Air Line Pilots Association have not yet indicated whether they would support a strike by IAM members. The flight attendants, organized by the Transport Workers Union, put out a

bulletin in early January defending the IAM and opposing the company's attempts to divide the unions. Flight attendants at LaGuardia have volunteered to help in the strike center the IAM will be setting up.

Ernest Mailhot is an aircraft service worker at Eastern Airlines at LaGuardia Airport. He is a member of IAM Local Lodge 1018.

Miami machinists walk out at Eastern

BY JEFF MILLER
AND ALAN GUMMERSON

MIAMI — A walkout by 1,700 union members protesting unjust disciplinary action against three workers hit the huge Eastern Airlines maintenance base facility at Miami International Airport February 7.

The walkout by members of the International Association of Machinists (IAM) began at 2:30 p.m. Although managers and foremen stationed themselves in hallways and told workers they would be fired if they left, the overwhelming majority of workers downed their tools and walked off the job.

The unionists streamed out of the base facility and gathered behind one of the large maintenance buildings. Union officials explained what the company had done: three mechanics from the components shop were told to work overtime Friday, February 3. They refused. The company told them to come in to work Sunday. They refused. When they reported for work on Monday, they were suspended for three days.

The maintenance workers marched, chanting and cheering, along the road that circles the runways. They gave thunderous applause to several hundred ramp service workers from the airport terminal who marched over, military-style, to join the protest.

At 4:00 p.m. the workers marched to a hangar, demanding that the company resolve the disciplinary actions immediately. An IAM District 100 general chairman climbed the scaffolding. He told workers that the company was willing to meet, but for now, the police said, the workers had to disperse. He told the workers to return to work.

"Hell no, we won't go!" responded the workers, refusing to move.

At 5:25 p.m. another general chairman climbed up and reported that the union was sending a telegram to the company de-

manding an immediate meeting.

At 5:40 p.m. he climbed up again and told the workers that the company would meet with the union immediately, on condition that they return to work. This time the workers agreed.

Company reprisals against some unionists began when they returned to work Feb-

ruary 8. There is no word yet on the results of the meeting with the company over the disciplinary action.

Jeff Miller and Alan Gummerson are members of IAM Local Lodge 702 in Miami, and work at the airport and Eastern's maintenance facility.

Activists in Haiti meet on anniversary of Duvalier ouster

BY MICHAEL BAUMANN
AND AL CAPPE

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti — Two hundred people filled the second-floor headquarters of the drivers' union here February 6 for the opening session of a two-day public meeting of opponents of the military regime — the "Forum for Unity in the People's Camp." As many as 100 more took part in the activities during the day.

The forum comes on the heels of a widely supported protest strike here January 17, and at a time of increasing isolation for the regime of Gen. Prosper Avril.

The meeting was initiated by the Independent Federation of Haitian Workers (CATH), National People's Assembly (APN), Peasant Movement of Milot (MPM), and League of Former Political Prisoners. It was widely publicized by the weekly newspaper *Haiti Progrès*, whose editor, Ben Dupuy, gave a major presentation at the opening session.

The conference also marks the third anniversary of the Feb. 7, 1986, downfall of the dictator Jean-Claude Duvalier. The government, for its part, organized a carnival in downtown Port-au-Prince, under the watchful eye of the army.

Other speakers at the opening session of the conference included Yves Antoine

Richard, general secretary of CATH, the main organizer of the January 17 strike; Jean-Claude Pierre-Louis, general secretary of the drivers' union; Jean Duval, a representative of the MPM; Lydie Pierre of Haitian Women Rise Up; Jean-Robert Lalane of the APN; Ernst Charles of the Revolutionary Committee of the Unemployed; and Patrice Dacius of the Haitian Workers Committee.

Representatives of some 15 other neighborhood, community, and church-based groups registered to attend the conference activities, which included workshops and a video on the 30th anniversary of the Cuban revolution.

Several observers from North America participated, but a number of invited guests, especially from the English-speaking Caribbean, were unable to attend because they were refused visas.

Discussions at the conference are demonstrating the growing confidence of the mass organizations.

"It is because of the rise in the popular movement that we are able to hold this forum," drivers' union president Pierre Louis told the *Militant*.

"The situation among the people is like a powder keg. The authorities are afraid to set it off."